

**INCIDENTS**  
IN THE LIFE OF  
**JOHN L. SULLIVAN AND**  
**OTHER FAMOUS PEOPLE**  
OF  
**FIFTY YEARS AGO**

*AS RELATED BY*  
**WILLIAM C. BURNS**  
(BLIND)

**Price \$1.00**

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# INCIDENTS

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but see #3122

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## Introduction

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**W**I利IAM ("Bill") Burns, the author of these memoirs, is a well-known and familiar figure to residents of Edmonton and the north country. He is to be seen, almost any time, either standing on the corner of Jasper Avenue and 101st Street, in front of the Selkirk Hotel, deep in conversation with some "crony" or else seated in the lobby of the hotel, similarly employed. Except for the fact that he wears a "blind" sign on his hat and carries a cane, he appears much the same as any other normal man. He looks to be about 50 years of age and still retains the firm jaw, well shaped head and healthful vigor of the fighting man. In reality, he is past 71 years of age and for two years has been forced to lead a life of idleness owing to total blindness.

He lives at the Selkirk Hotel, where he is a "non-paying guest," through the kindness of the proprietor, "Bob" McDonald, who has long been a friend of his.

Mr. Burns, up until the time of his blindness, led a very roving life and has had wide and varied experiences in many different corners of the globe. He is a fluent conversationalist and tells many an interesting yarn of the early prize fighting days. He himself, was at one time a fairly noted fighter. He has a wonderful memory and can give vivid descriptions of nearly every battle in which the more famous fighters of early days took part.

Through a suggestion made by his friend, "Bob" McDonald, Mr. Burns conceived the idea of writing a history of his experiences, as a means of enlarging his income, and the following chapters are the result of this inspiration.

## Author's Acknowledgment

THE author gratefully acknowledges the kindness and assistance of his friends in preparing this story, without which it would have been impossible to publish this book.

The following have rendered invaluable aid, and if any name has been omitted it was quite unintentional as the list was made from memory.

### EDMONTON

R Macdonald  
J Macdonald  
Staff of Selkirk Hotel  
Journal and Staff  
Bulletin and Staff  
Dr Washburn  
Staff of University of Alberta Hospital  
Richard Secord  
A C Bell  
(Late) C W Cross  
Charles Hepburn  
Joseph Adair  
Harry Douglas  
Jones & Cross  
Harry Coles, Capitol Cleaners  
Harry V Coles, Night Flers  
Dr J E Wilkinson, Dentist  
Dr W O Farquharson  
A E Higginson  
Harold Johnston  
Carl Johnson, Barber  
Green, Capitol Barber Shop  
Joe Tyrell, McDermid's Ltd  
Mrs Mattie Sealer  
Emily Burroughs  
James Fitzgerald and Wife  
Ed Foley and Wife  
Ben Foley  
A F Hollaway  
Ralph Rogers  
Mr Johnson, of Johnson's Cafe  
Staff of Johnson's Cafe  
Rod Morrison, Dominion Motors  
Mr Essery, of Essery Ltd  
W A Ferguson, Jeweler  
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Capt Myers of Steamship "Athabasca River"  
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Jack Devers and Wife

### SPIRIT RIVER

(Late) Wilfred Read and Wife

### BON ACCORD

Jim and Bill Schneider  
Neilson Bros

### CADOMIN

Charlie Lockhart

### MIRROR LANDING

Billy Lee

And Many Others



W. C. BURNS



**ROBERT McDONALD**  
PROPRIETOR OF  
**HOTEL SELKIRK AND HOTEL YALE**  
AN ESTEEMED, TRIED AND TRUE FRIEND OF THE AUTHOR.



# Hudson's Bay Company.

INCORPORATED 2<sup>nd</sup> MAY 1670.

ALBERTA & ARCTIC TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

Edmonton, Alberta,  
9th February, 1928.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to certify that I have personally known Mr. Wm. Burns for the past sixteen years, during which time he has been employed at homesteading, wood-cutting and as a watchman. Of recent years, and until forced to discontinue active work some twelve months ago on account of total loss of sight, he was occupied as a cord-wood contractor in connection with the river steamers of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Mr. Burns has always been regarded as straightforward and trustworthy, and, knowing him as I do, I would have no hesitation in accepting as absolutely authentic the facts set down by him in the memoirs which he is engaged in preparing. It is understood that it is Mr. Burn's intention to endeavour to establish a source of income through the publication of these reminiscences.

H. PETTY,

Accountant and Agent.

H. B. Co., A. & A. T. Dept.

## CHAPTER I

THIS is the true story of interesting experiences which I have had during my lifetime and tells how fate so manipulated the strings that I became acquainted with the famous pugilists and many other noted persons of sixty years ago.

I was born near London, Ontario, on March 14th, 1857, and lived there for the first six years of my life, after which I and the rest of my family moved to Sarnia, Ontario, where we resided for one year, then moved across to Michigan, near Port Huron. It was during my stay at this place that I met the man who was destined to be famous in a very few years as the champion heavyweight pugilist of the United States, namely, Mike McCoole.

My uncle, Ed. Burns, was working on the Erie Canal, out of Buffalo, and once, when on a visit to my parents, he brought with him a strapping big fellow standing six feet and weighing over two hundred pounds. This was my first meeting with Mike McCoole. My uncle, after visiting with us for a week, wanted me to go back with him as there was a job on the Erie Canal for me. I was nine years of age at that time and was promised the enormous sum of \$10.00 per month for riding a mule pulling a tow-line twelve hours a day. So I packed up my belongings and, with my uncle and Mike McCoole, took a steam barge from Port Huron to Buffalo, working my way as I went.

My uncle had been telling everyone we met what a wonderful fighter this Mike McCoole was, and, as they possessed a pair of boxing gloves, practically every day of our trip down on the barge saw them giving an exhibition for the benefit of the captain and crew. Shortly after we landed in Buffalo, I had a chance to see the wonderful McCoole in a real fight, this time a rough-and-tumble on Canal Street, with a big "rough-neck" looking for trouble. Needless to say, McCoole scored an easy victory in about fifteen minutes, but, even so, the battle was well worth seeing and a large "free" audience soon gathered. From that time on I suffered from a bad case of "Hero Worship," McCoole being my idol, and every place he went I went also, and many a time I stubbed my toe through too much star-gazing in an effort to keep my hero's beloved face in view.

Work on the Erie Canal lasted for about a year and a half, until July, 1868, and, during that time, I saw McCoole in many a fight and never once did he fail to come out on top. About

the time we finished work on the canal, my uncle and McCoole heard of a wonderful fighter by the name of Tom Jennings, famous at that time as the "Bully of New Orleans." McCoole's fighting spirit would not let him rest until he had met the famous Mr. Jennings, so we all three proceeded to Cincinnati, thence down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to New Orleans. As soon as we arrived, McCoole set out to locate Jennings. He found him working as foreman on the levee. Pugilists at that time were not so well paid as they are at the present and found it necessary to "work" as well as fight. McCoole informed Jennings that he had come to fight him and Jennings replied, "All right, how much do you want to fight for?" McCoole told him he would fight him for \$100.00 right on the spot but Jennings refused. However, he agreed to fight him for \$250.00, but he said the fight would have to take place out of town as the police would arrest them if they staged a fight there. So it was arranged and Captain Davis of the Steamer "Natchez" was consulted and we all repaired to his cabin to draw up articles of agreement and arrange the fight. Jennings had the \$250.00, all right, but all my uncle and McCoole could scrape up was \$230.00. I had \$22.00 and willingly supplied the extra \$20.00.

The match was arranged to take place twelve miles down the river on the following Saturday, five days from the date of the challenge. The articles of agreement provided that the opponents should be in the ring ready to fight at any time after 11 a.m. and before 12 o'clock noon, or forfeit the stake money. Captain Davis arranged an excursion to carry the fighters and spectators to the battle-ground, scheduled to leave at nine o'clock Saturday morning. Spectators were required to pay \$1.00 each for the trip down and back on the boat. Outside of that, it was a free show. About a thousand persons took in the excursion. The Steamer "Natchez", which was to do duty on the great day, was an old-fashioned stern wheeler, a regular Mississippi boat.

McCoole, several days previous, had ordered a pair of spiked boots for the occasion, as the fight was, of course, to take place on the ground. Eight o'clock on Saturday morning found us at the dock with the rest of the crowd, all eager to go. We found we had an hour to wait, so McCoole suggested that he and I go back up town to get his boots. We were gone about twenty minutes and when we returned, we were aghast to find that, through some streak of bad fortune, the Steamer "Natchez" had pulled out and was two or three miles down the river, leaving McCoole and me a forlorn pair on the dock. We set about looking for a row-boat or some other means of navigation to follow the steamer, but our efforts were in vain, so we did the only thing left to us, namely, walked down the levee. The walking was good and the way was long, but the knowledge that

we must be there before noon or lose \$250.00 was a great spur to our efforts. We left New Orleans at 8.30 a.m. and, sometimes walking and sometimes running, arrived at the scene of the battle at twenty minutes to twelve. The boat, of course, had arrived hours before. Our absence was not noted until the boat docked and you may be sure great consternation was felt when it was found that one of the chief entertainers was among the missing. However, they decided to wait patiently and see if we wouldn't turn up later. When, about 11.30, they spied us in the distance warily plodding along, the siren of the steamer proceeded to serenade us and we were greeted with mighty cheers from all present. The ring had been pitched and Jennings was already in his fighting togs. It didn't take McCoole long to prepare himself likewise. Then a referee was chosen, the choice falling on Bud Raymous, a well-known sporting man of New Orleans. The seconds then proceeded to toss a coin for a choice of corners. Jennings came out winner and chose the south corner with the sun to his back. There were no chairs in those days, so that the second would kneel on one knee and his principal sit on the other while in the corner. The fight was governed according to the old London Prize Ring rules by which a round ended when a man was either knocked down or thrown down. Thirty seconds were allowed for rest between rounds. At 12 o'clock sharp, the men were called to the centre for instructions from the referee, they shook hands and went to their corners, and the fight was on. It lasted two hours and ten minutes, during which time they fought twenty-five rounds. Much to my elation, I had the honor of being "bottle-holder," that is, I held the bottle of water from which McCoole drank during intermissions. Both fighters were extremely large men, McCool weighing about 205 pounds and Jennings about 215 or 220, and both were in good condition. No gloves were used, bare knuckles being the style in those days.

In the very first round my heart sank to zero when the men met in the centre of the ring and Jennings knocked McCoole down and opened a big gash in his cheek after a bout lasting one minute and thirty seconds. As McCoole came to his corner, my heart sank deeper still and I pictured myself kissing my hard-earned \$20.00 good-bye. Jennings had the best of the first eight rounds, practically every one of which he won by either knocking or throwing McCoole down. Neither of these men was a champion at that time and it was a desperate battle, with both contestants covered with blood and dirt. However, after the eighth round, McCoole snapped into it and proceeded to show what he was made of, getting the best of Jennings in every round from then on. After every round from the fifteenth on, Jennings had to be carried to his corner, as he was unable

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to walk. Both were badly punished, and in the twenty-fifth round, which was the final one, McCoole walked up to Jennings and knocked him over like a nine-pin. After that, there was no fight left in Jennings. He was carried to his corner but fell off his improvised chair utterly exhausted.

This was McCoole's first real battle and the reputation he gained as a result of his hard-won victory led up to his fight with Tom Allen on June 14th, 1869, for the championship of America, but, as Kipling would say, that is another story.

## CHAPTER II

AFTER the McCoole-Jennings fight, particulars of which I related in Chapter I, McCoole, my uncle and I returned to New Orleans where we stayed for three weeks while the Steamer "Natchez" made a trip to Memphis and back. Most of this time my uncle and McCoole spent at dinners and celebrations of every description given in honor of the great victory. Being too young and innocent at this time to take part in the above mentioned celebrations which my uncle and McCoole so enjoyed, I had to content myself with trips to the French Market in company with a boy chum in search of lemonade and gingerbread, my favorite tit-bits.

Meanwhile word had reached us of another famous fighter in St. Louis, Missouri, Tom Connor by name, reputed to have come out winner in every battle he had fought, so McCoole decided there were other worlds still to be conquered. When the "Natchez" returned, we all took passage to Memphis, I as cabin boy, my uncle and McCoole as deck hands, thus economizing on passage money.

On the boat were a number of very prominent persons most of them veterans of the Confederate Army, two of them being General George E. Pickett and Captain Tom Forrest, the great cavalry leader of the Confederate Army. He was born and raised in the mountains of Kentucky and was a wonderful horseman. In a conversation one day with Captain Davis of the "Natchez" and General Pickett, he was asked by Captain Davis what was the secret of his great success as a cavalryman. Forrest replied in his native drawl, "Wal, suh, it's the side that can git the mostest men and hoss in the fewest time."

We arrived in Memphis in due time and immediately took passage on the steamer "Molly McPike" for St. Louis. During our stay on this boat, I met two men who, shortly after, were to become extremely famous in the literary world. One of these was Samuel Clemens, then pilot on the "Molly McPike," later known as Mark Twain, the noted humorist. The other was General Lew Wallace who is now known throughout the world as the author of *Ben Hur*.

Clemens, or Mark Twain, was a small dark man, at that time about thirty years of age, with almost feminine features, and a mop of long black hair. I was too young at that time to

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appreciate the fact that I was in the presence of genius, but I did notice that wherever Mark Twain was there also was much laughter and good humor.

General Wallace was a totally different type of man,—short and thick set, with a bald head and long drooping moustache. He was then about fifty years old. His favorite topic of conversation was "fishing."

However, to continue with my story. We arrived in St. Louis on Thursday and, on every side, people were discussing the fighting qualities of Tom Connors, more commonly known as "Shanghai" Connors. It seems the famous "Shanghai" ran a "Free-and-Easy," that is a big hall with a saloon and entertainment platform, the seating capacity of the hall being about 500, with two rows of boxes on either side. It was his custom, every Saturday night, to appear on the stage and challenge anyone in the house "whether he be tall, short, lean or fat" to fight him with gloves for "fun, money or marbles."

Captain Adams of the steamer "Molly McPike" had passed the word around among the shippers and steamboat captains in St. Louis that he had a man, a deck hand, who would take Connor's measure on Saturday night, consequently Saturday night found Connor's "Free-and-Easy" full to the doors.

In those days boys of my tender years were not allowed in saloon premises so, in order that I might be present at the fight, Captain Adams secured a messenger's cap and badge for me and it was arranged that I was to wait outside until I got word that Connors had issued his challenge and been accepted by McCole, then I was to arrive, supposedly as a messenger delivering McCole's fighting togs. Once in, there was no danger of my being kicked out as every one was too excited to notice a small boy out of place.

Everything happened according to schedule; Connors made his boast and McCole jumped onto the stage and accepted it. The spectators paid 25 cents each for the privilege of witnessing the fight which lasted five rounds. It was governed by *Police Gazette* rules which provided for three minutes fighting and one minute rest, and a man was counted out if he was knocked down and failed to rise within ten seconds. McCole had the best of the battle from the very beginning and, at the end of the fifth round, left Connors a dejected looking spectacle sprawled on the floor of the orchestra pit. McCole, of course, was declared winner and his name held even more magic in St. Louis than it had in New Orleans. Several St. Louis business men waxed so enthusiastic that they bought him a saloon and set him up in the trade where his fame as a fighter proved a great drawing card and made business very profitable indeed. Two other saloon-keepers of the district, both of whom were lightweight fighters, grew very antagonistic when their former

customers began to patronize McCole's place. Things came to the boiling point eventually and McCole's two rivals, Jim Daly and Jack Looney by name, declared war, vowing that they would get a man to beat McCole if they had to send all the way to England for him. They carried out their threat, importing a man by the name of Tom Allen, at that time the heavyweight champion of England.

During all this time McCole had been strutting around with a chip on his shoulder, but the time was soon to come when he would have to prove his worth or eliminate the strut; but more anon!

### CHAPTER III

ALLEN arrived in St. Louis in January, 1869, and established his headquarters at the Planter's Hotel. The night of his arrival he published a challenge in the St. Louis *Globe Democrat* offering to fight McCoole with bare knuckles under London Prize Ring rules for \$2,000 a side. The next day McCoole published his acceptance of the challenge in the same paper, setting a date three days later for them to meet and make arrangements. According to schedule, McCoole and Allen with their respective backers, together with the local sportsmen, met in the lobby of the Southern Hotel and proceeded to draw up articles of agreement and post the money. The articles of agreement called for a fair stand-up fight under London Prize Ring rules with a pot of \$2,000 each, side bet, as there was no gate money in those days. Pat Cormidy, a well-known horseman and hotel proprietor, was appointed stakeholder. Among the many celebrities who witnessed the signing of the articles were the following: Dick Roach, a noted sportsman, famous in later years as the backer of Jack McAuliffe, the undefeated light-weight champion of America, and still living today in New York City; Mark Twain and General Lew Wallace, both of whom I have mentioned previously; General John A. Logan who ran for Vice-President of the United States with James G. Blaine against Grover Cleveland and W. H. Hendricks in 1884, the latter couple winning on the Democratic ticket; William F. Cody, better known as Buffalo Bill, the noted Indian scout and horseman; General Nelson A. Miles, commander of the United States army in 1876.

For two months following the meeting arranging the fight Allen travelled around the country giving exhibitions of boxing in order to replenish his stock of ready money. His efforts proved unsuccessful, however, as people wanted to see a real fight and were not interested in boxing exhibitions. Meanwhile, McCoole in his saloon, was taking in money hand over fist. On the 15th of April, both McCoole and Allen started training for the fight. The light punching bags, so popular now, were not used in those days. Instead a bag filled with sand and weighing about fifty pounds was substituted, to harden the hands for bare-knuckle fighting. Besides boxing, they indulged in plenty of walking and running. Allen was trained by Jack Looney and Jim Daly while Ed. Burns (my uncle) and Jerry

Donovan did similar duty for McCoole. Donovan was famous in those days as a second, being a great middleweight fighter himself, and brother of Mike Donovan, famous years afterwards as the boxing instructor of the New York Athletic Club of which President Roosevelt was a member before his presidency. After Roosevelt became President, Mike Donovan used to make a trip to Washington, D.C., every two weeks to box with him.

But, to continue with my story. Elaborate arrangements were made for the fight and the "Molly McPike," the same steamer which brought us to St. Louis, was chartered to carry the spectators and combatants to the scene of the fight, the location of which was kept a secret. Tickets for the excursion cost \$2.50 each. June the fourteenth proved to be a beautiful sunny day. The fighters and their seconds came aboard early, before the crowd, and hid themselves in the hold of the boat in different compartments, as it was known that the police were going to attempt to arrest the fighters and their seconds for what is known in legal terms as "abetting a prize fight." Once safe in their compartments below deck, the siren tooted the half hour whistle and the crowd flocked onto the boat. The police were after them hot foot, headed by the chief, and, after every one was aboard, they stationed two guards at the gang plank while the rest of them searched the boat, beginning with the cabin, and making a thorough job of it. However, neither fighters nor seconds came to light so the police were obliged to depart, baffled, and the excursion started merrily on its way. The crowd was in high "spirits," and the bar on the boat did a rushing business. As soon as we left the dock, McCoole and Allen emerged from their shells and joined the crowd. The "spirits" before mentioned soon got beyond control and at least thirty free-for-all fights took place among the spectators, mostly because of differences of opinion as to who would be winner of the big battle. Immediately after leaving St. Louis, the secret regarding the location of the battle-ground was divulged. The fight had been arranged to take place on a beautiful island fifteen miles from St. Louis, this particular spot having been chosen because of the fact that it was not under the sheriff's jurisdiction and the only person who had authority over it was the United States Marshal, and we trusted to luck that he would not appear on the scene. The place could hardly be considered an appropriate setting for a fight as it was covered with beautiful elm trees and flowers, at that time of year in full bloom, and looked more like a picnic ground than the scene of a fight. We arrived about 10 a.m. and in a very short time had the ring pitched and everything in readiness. The men appeared in the ring and the referee was chosen, a man by the name of Valentine McKinney. This

time I was not granted the position of bottle-holder as previously, nor any other position connected with the fight, but, nevertheless, was just as eager as the rest to get a close view of things. I was running down the gang plank on my way to the ring when a voice hailed me: "Hey, Bill, where are you going?" I looked up and there was Mark Twain sitting by the pilot house on a bench. He shouted to me to join him as he said I could see the fight better from where he was and also informed me that it was a poor place for me among all the crowd around the ring, so I scrambled up and took a seat beside him. We shared our bench with another man, whom Mark Twain addressed as "Bob," his full name being Robert G. Ingersoll, the great lawyer and orator, also well known to be an infidel. Among the spectators crowded around the ring was a big handsome fellow about twenty years of age, William Muldoon by name, later the champion Græco-Roman wrestler of the world, and, at the present time, chairman of the Boxing Commission of New York City. He also runs a Health Farm at White Plains, N.Y. As far as I know he is the only living man besides myself who witnessed this fight of fifty-nine years ago.

Just before the men were called to the centre by the referee to shake hands, McCoole walked over to Allen's corner with a bundle of bills in his hand and wanted to bet Allen \$500.00 that he, McCoole, would win the fight. Allen shook his head and replied that he had no more money to bet, at which the crowd jeered and hooted, as McCoole fans were in the majority. Just then the referee called them to the centre, they shook hands, and the fight began.

I, for one, was confident that McCoole would win easily as Allen was a much smaller man, weighing only about 170 lbs. to McCoole's 205, and I could not conceive of his even giving McCoole a fair battle. However, I soon changed my opinion. In the very first round, Allen started in to chop his burly opponent to pieces. He was a finished boxer and every time McCoole would make a rush, he would meet him with a straight left or right, avoiding McCoole's blows with a clever guard. The first round lasted two minutes, ending when McCoole, with a sudden streak of luck, threw Allen. When the second round started McCoole rushed at Allen, but Allen met him with a straight left, opening a cut over McCoole's left eye. McCoole clinched, but Allen fought him off and won the round by knocking McCoole down. The cut over McCoole's eye proved very bothersome as the bleeding could not be stopped and it continued to run into his eye all through the rest of the fight, making him almost desperate as he was unable to see clearly. Then, to make matters worse, in the seventh round, Allen opened another cut over his right eye, so that, between the two cuts, McCoole was practically blinded, but he struggled on gamely, giving the worst of the

punches in every round. In the eighteenth round, which was the final one, Allen missed a left punch at McCoole's head and they had clinched, Allen grasping McCoole around the neck with his left arm (in fighting dialect, McCoole's head was "in chancery"), and pummelling him in the face with his right. In desperation, McCoole made one last effort and threw Allen, and, in falling, Allen accidentally stuck his finger in McCoole's eye. McCoole's seconds at once claimed a foul and excitement ran riot. McKinney, the referee, climbed out of the ring and went to the boat, claiming the right to reserve his decision until we returned to St. Louis. Of course, after the referee left, the fighters had no choice but to follow suit, which they did, much to the dissatisfaction of the crowd in general.

Fighting among the fans continued all the way back to St. Louis. The following morning a notice appeared in the St. Louis *Globe Democrat*, reading something like this:

"I, Valentine McKinney, referee of the late McCoole-Allen fight, give the fight to McCoole on a foul in the eighteenth round, finding that Allen gouged McCoole's eye."

I may say that this fight between McCoole and Allen was one of the most sensational I have ever witnessed from that day to this.

## CHAPTER IV

THERE is one incident of the McCoole-Allen fight which I forgot to mention. I think I told of McCoole's offer to bet Allen \$500.00 that he would win the fight and Allen's refusal to accept the same. As soon as McCoole found Allen would not bet with him, he returned to his corner of the ring and handed the \$500.00 to Jerry Donovan, his second, to keep for him. Jerry transferred the roll to his pocket, but the pocket did not prove a very safe depository, for, during the excitement caused by the outcome of the final round when a foul was called on Allen, someone quietly lifted the ill-fated roll. Mr. Cormidy, the stakeholder, also lost his pocketbook in a like mysterious manner, but luck was with him, for all it contained was a certificate of deposit on a St. Louis bank for \$4,000.00 which was non-negotiable. Apparently, however, our friend of the "taking" ways was a gentleman at heart, for the next day, much to Mr. Cormidy's surprise, he received a parcel by mail containing the missing purse and certificate.

Another incident of the sort occurred when the boat docked in St. Louis. After most of the crowd had left the boat, leaving only a few stragglers behind, the purser gave me a note to take to the head office on shore. The boat was equipped with a stairway on either side about three feet in width with boards up each side and I had started down the stairway on my way to shore. I was in a great hurry and was about half way down when I ran into a group of men. One of these was Bob Ingersoll with two men in front of him and two behind while two more were apparently trying to ascend. One of the men in front of Mr. Ingersoll carried a light overcoat over his arm and seemed to have his hand against Mr. Ingersoll's chest but his overcoat hid it from view. I, all unsuspecting and very much in a hurry, took very little notice of them, most of my attention being taken up with dodging back and forth in a frantic endeavor to squeeze past them. Suddenly I heard the man with the overcoat say "It's off." With that the men dispersed leaving my way clear. I heard Mr. Ingersoll say "I don't know what's off, but it's a great relief to me." A few minutes afterwards, however, he discovered his loss. He had given a lecture in St. Louis on the night of June 13th for which he had received \$400.00, and this sum the thieves had very neatly appropriated, while I, dodging about on the stairway, had been an innocent stall for the dip. The following day I was going up town when

I met the man of the overcoat. As he passed me he said, "Are you the cabin boy of the Steamer 'Molly McPike'?" "Yes, sir," I replied. At that he handed me a folded bill with instructions that I was to say nothing about it. I took it, thinking it was only a one dollar bill, but, after walking on about a block I dodged into an alley and took a closer look at my tip, when, to my surprise, I found it was a twenty dollar bill. Needless to say I kept silence! I became better acquainted with this very beneficent gentleman in later years. His name was Richard Preston, alias Windy Dick, the cleverest pickpocket at that time in the whole of the United States. In 1899 this same man, when getting off the Steamer "Flyer," plying between Seattle and Tacoma, Wash., neatly lifted a seven carat diamond from the necktie of "Nigger Jim" Doherty, the Klondiker. Pictures of the famous Windy Dick adorn every rogues' gallery in the United States.

But, to get back to my story. I continued as cabin boy on the "Molly McPike" for two years, during which time Clemens (Mark Twain) and I became very good friends. As he was pilot of the steamer and quite frequently unable to leave his post at meal-times, I used often to take a lunch to him. He was extremely fond of mince pie and, when this was on the menu, he never failed to order it, even though it did not agree with him. One day he ordered two pieces of mince pie saying he was going to have it out and see whether he or the mince pie was master. About two hours afterwards he turned to me with the remark, "The mince pie has won." After that, to my knowledge, he never ate any more mince pie.

On our many trips up and down the river, we often passed the island where McCoole and Allen had fought, now known as Bloody Island, and I never failed to look at it, but little did I think that in six years' time I, myself, at eighteen years of age, would be fighting a seasoned veteran by the name of Tom McAlpine, on that very same spot.

Meanwhile things in St. Louis were getting rather exciting, there being much disputing between the backers of McCoole and those of Allen, so a second fight was arranged to settle matters, this time with a stake of \$2,500.00 a side, the fight to take place on December 10th just outside of Bowling Green, Kentucky. This time Allen came out winner after a desperate battle of eighteen rounds (the same number as before), by knocking McCoole out. McCoole was so badly thrashed that his seconds could not persuade him to get up and get dressed even after he had been down about ten minutes. Jerry Donovan, on a final inspiration, shouted, "Get up, Mike, the police are coming to arrest you." McCoole only replied, "I don't give a hang for

the police, and I can neither stand, sit nor walk." When they finally did get him onto his feet, they placed him in a hack and took him to Bowling Green to recover.

These two terrible battles between Allen and McCoole established ring history, for never before nor since has a heavy-weight champion lost the championship and won it back from the same man.

After two years on the river, business grew slack and I decided I would go to Chicago as I had a brother there, three years my senior, so Captain Adams gave me a letter of introduction to a well-known politician and sportsman there, Mike McDonald by name. That was in 1872, the year after the big Chicago fire. I was then fifteen years of age. I soon secured a position as messenger boy, as telephones had not then been invented and boys served as messengers. I became close chums with another boy about my own age by the name of Jim O'Leary and used often to visit at his home near thirty-second and State Streets. This one-time messenger boy died three years ago in Chicago worth three million dollars. It was a cow belonging to his mother that kicked over the lamp that started the great Chicago fire of 1871. Most people have probably heard the story of how the Chicago fire started, but, for the benefit of those who haven't, I will repeat the story as I heard it:

The O'Leary's kept their cow in a little frame barn and had it comfortably bedded all around with straw, in fact there was straw all over the barn floor. It seems that on the night of the fire several young ladies, living about two blocks from the O'Leary's residence, were having a party. About twelve o'clock someone suggested that they make some milk punch, which was all O.K. except that milk was a minus quantity. As all stores were closed at that time of night, they were in a quandary as to how they could secure some milk, when one of the young ladies said, "Let's go and milk Mrs. O'Leary's cow." No sooner said than done! Four of the girls volunteered to do duty, one carrying a pail and another a coal oil lamp and matches. As soon as they got to the barn, they lit the lamp and placed it on the floor behind the cow, while one of them got a stool and proceeded to give an exhibition of milking. Madame cow turned her head and evidently the vision which greeted her did not please her, for she let fly vigorously with both hind feet thereby upsetting the lamp. The girls, feminine things in those days, screamed and ran for home, leaving the overturned lamp in the straw of the barn floor. Thus the origin of the Chicago fire of 1871.

After Allen's victory over McCoole in December, 1869, there was a lull in the fighting game until the spring of 1870, when Allen was challenged for the championship by Charlie

Gallagher of Cleveland, Ohio. This proved to be a very un-exciting match as Allen won easily after a nine round battle lasting only thirty-five minutes.

Allen's next encounter was with Ben Hogan in 1871. Hogan's home was in Oil City and he was generally considered a "tough character." He owned and ran a saloon in his home town, the reputation of which was anything but savory. Oil City at that time was booming and Hogan was only one of many to make his fortune in a similar manner. Conditions in Oil City at this time were very much the same as those which existed in Skagway and other Yukon towns during the gold rush of '98. Hogan, trading on his reputation as a "tough guy," decided to challenge Allen just to prove how tough he really was. So the fight was arranged, Hogan backing himself for \$5,000, the fight to take place in Oil City. However, much to Hogan's surprise, the battle did not turn out as he expected, for Allen knocked all the fight out of him in twelve rounds. Hogan was so affected by this most unexpected defeat that he suffered a complete change of heart. He sold his saloon and with the proceeds therefrom, erected a church, where he himself occupied the pulpit as an evangelist. But this new life did not seem to agree with him and he died about a year after the erection of his church. No money was found to his credit in the bank though he was known to be worth close to \$100,000.00, so people came to the conclusion that he must have hidden it somewhere, most likely in the vicinity of his church. This belief grew and was exaggerated as time went on, until finally the story was circulated that the money was hidden under a brick in the side wall of the church near the altar. Several enterprising citizens even went so far as to arrange midnight excursions to the church armed with pick and shovel, plus shaded lanterns, in a vain search for the lost treasure.

Even I did not escape the current madness. I was in Chicago when I first heard the story in 1879. Billy McLean told the story to myself and two of my friends but he told it as having been a death-bed confession made by Ben Hogan to himself. He even went so far as to draw us a chart showing the supposed location of the brick, which, when removed, would reveal the lost treasure. The next day found my two friends and me on the way to Oil City. We arrived in the afternoon and went immediately to the only hotel the town then boasted. The bustling town with which I had been so familiar in boom days was a thing of the past, the population being not more than 300 in comparison to about 8,000 in the old days.

As we registered at the hotel, I noticed that the clerk favored us with a rather peculiar and searching glance followed by a half smile. However, I thought nothing of it at the time. We spent the rest of the afternoon sizing up the scene of our

proposed operations that evening. The church was situated about half a mile from town and, on our way there, every person we met favored us with an amused glance similar to that with which the clerk at the hotel had greeted us. However, that evening at eleven o'clock, we fared forth. The church door was open, so the first step of our adventure proved easy enough. We consulted our chart and soon located the magic brick. This we loosened with a chisel though a chisel was hardly necessary as the brick came out quite easily as though it had been removed before. We did not have time to wonder over this factor of the case, however, for I had just started to pull it out when we heard a deafening roar which apparently came from directly over our heads. At the same time the church bell started to clamor as though all hell had been let loose. No negro pursued by a phantom ever ran any faster than we did. We dropped everything and lit out across country on the double-quick and I feel sure that if Harry Bethune or Coo-Coo Collins had been there, they would have had nothing on me as a sprinter. After pausing a few moments for a breather, we returned to the hotel, trying to look innocent and unconcerned, but the cat was out of the bag, for, on entering the hotel, we were greeted by practically the whole populace of Oil City, all with the same question on their tongues: "Did you find the hidden treasure?" To save our faces, we felt obliged to buy drinks for the crowd after which we were initiated into the "Royal Society of Practical Jokers," and let into the secret of the explosion at the church. It seems that they had obtained an old muzzle loading army musket and set it in a frame about a foot and a half from the bell of the church. This they had loaded with powder and wads of paper. A wire had been attached to the trigger and extended down through the church and fastened to the famous brick by the altar. Thus, the moment the brick was removed, the gun exploded and set the bell to ringing. This was the simple little device which had so abruptly terminated our search for lost treasure and branded us fools before the whole town.

However, when I think of it now, I am comforted by the thought that many other bold fortune hunters have suffered the same humiliation as I did and at the same place. For twenty years this little practical joke furnished amusement for the people of Oil City.

Shortly after the Allen-Hogan fight, Allen returned to England, and McCoole, taking advantage of his absence, issued a challenge to fight anyone in the whole of the United States. I have often thought since that if McCoole at that time had been enabled to foresee what the future held in store for him he would never have issued this fatal challenge. However, it was accepted by Joe Colburn of New York City, a man who

had risen from the ranks and won fame as a fighter in less than a year. The stakes this time were \$5,000 a side and the match was arranged to take place at Collier Station, West Virginia. Everything went off according to schedule, but, instead of coming out as an easy winner as he had been so confident he would, McCole was subjected to a terrible beating, lasting fifteen rounds. He had backed himself for the \$5,000 stake money and, besides that, had bet heavily on himself, thus at the finish of the fight he was practically \$10,000 poorer than he had been to begin with. Then, to make matters worse, on his arrival back in St. Louis, he found that his wife of only eight months had eloped with another man, taking with her practically all the money he had in the world. Broken both in heart and in spirit, he sold out his business and, with the proceeds, went on a grand spree to drown his sorrows. After a year of this manner of living, he landed back in New Orleans penniless and with his health completely shattered. He died in the poor-house in 1874 at the age of 29.

In the meantime, Allen, shortly after his return to England, had lost the championship to Jem Mace in thirty-two rounds. Five months later Allen's backers arranged another match between the two men on condition that Mace would agree to a sixteen-foot ring, thus giving Allen, as his backers confidently believed, a better chance for his particular style of fighting. The stakes this time were raised from \$2,500 to \$5,000 a side. But Allen's hopes were once more dashed to the ground for Mace again won an easy victory, this time after a battle of only twelve rounds.

Stories of Mace's prowess soon reached the United States whereupon a match was arranged between him and Joe Colburn to take place at Port Dover, Canada, in June, 1874. This match proved to be a farce as the men spent over an hour in the ring without striking a blow, merely feinting and side-stepping. The militia put an end to this by appearing on the scene and ordering the fighters off Canadian soil. I think now that both fighters had a "hunch" that they were going to be forcibly ejected, otherwise they would have made the fight more realistic.

My uncle and I had both been spectators of this most unsatisfactory battle and, when it was over and we had all returned to Buffalo, my uncle located Mace and charged him with faking. Of course a fight ensued, a regular rough and tumble, and, much to my surprise and that of all the onlookers, my uncle gave Mace a terrible beating up, although he was not a professional boxer, in fact had never had any training of any description.

In my next chapter, I will deal with my own personal experiences in the ring.

## CHAPTER VI

DURING all this time, practically ever since my arrival in Chicago, I had been spending all my spare moments boxing in the hope that I might some day become proficient. My usual sparring partner was a fellow by the name of George Syler, a noted light-weight pugilist at that time, and later famous as a referee.

Mike Macdonald, my self-appointed guardian, always swore by me as a fighter. One day one of his best friends, a fellow by the name of Isaac Stevenson, who had made his fortune in the lumber business and who lived at Marionette, Wisconsin, paid him a visit. A discussion arose regarding prize fights in general and Stevenson declared he had a man by the name of Johnny Mulligan working for him as foreman in the woods, who could lick any man of his size in the whole of Chicago. Macdonald, always my champion, pooh-poohed this statement, telling Stevenson that he had a messenger boy weighing only 140 pounds whom he would match with Mr. Mulligan any time at all. Before the day was out, the match had been all planned and arrangements made for it to take place in six weeks time, the stakes being \$500 a side.

The battle came off on July 1st at Green Bay, Wisconsin. The spectators consisted of about 200 sporting men from Chicago and about the same number of lumberjacks, employees of Stevenson and of course Mulligan fans. John Haden of Green Bay was appointed referee.

Mulligan had been in training for some time under C. A. C. Smith, a famous colored boxer from Saginaw, Michigan, while my uncle and my brother Jack and Jerry Donovan did like duty for me. Needless to say, Jerry Donovan was as Irish as Paddy's pig and had an incurable hatred for all negroes. Shortly before the fight began, C. A. C. Smith called to Jerry, "We'll lick you in twenty minutes, Jerry." "Naw you won't," Jerry replied, "nor you aither, Mr. Negger." As it happened, Jerry proved to be right, for, after a twenty-one round fight lasting two hours, I delivered a knock-out blow, thus winning my first real fight.

As a result Stevenson lost quite a bit of money, but he could well afford it as he was a millionaire even then and when he died, about five years ago, he was worth close to fifty million dollars, and had held for twenty-five years the position of United States Senator for Wisconsin.

Another spectator of this fight whose name is worthy of mention was Robert M. LaFollette, Governor of Wisconsin about twenty-five or thirty years ago, and since then United States Senator until about four years ago, when he died in Washington, D.C. His son is now United States Senator in his place.

Two weeks after the Mulligan fight, my second encounter was arranged, my opponent this time being Tom McAlpine, a veteran ring artist of New York City. The stake was \$500 a side and the scene of the battle was Bloody Island where McCoole won his false victory over Allen six years previously. But, instead of the fifteen hundred spectators who witnessed the McCoole-Allen fight, we drew a much smaller crowd, totalling not over two hundred persons. The referee was a famous gun-fighter by the name of William B. Masterson, more commonly known as "Bat" Masterson. He later became marshal of Dodge City, Kansas, and, later still, President Roosevelt created the office of United States marshal for the district of New York and recommended Masterson for the position, which position he held until the election of Woodrow Wilson as President. He then secured a position as sporting editor of the New York *Evening Telegraph*.

The date set for the fight was October 10th, 1875. Everything went off O.K. and the crucial moment arrived. Just before time was called, I noticed four men of very quiet and unassuming appearance sitting on the ground close to my corner of the ring, and, on closer scrutiny, I remembered having seen them several years before when I was serving my time on the river. The tallest of the four men whispered to me, "Boy, do your best, we are with you." "We are friends of Samuel Clemens." I was rather surprised but thought little of it at the time. I was to see more of these men later, however.

Time was called and the fight started. McAlpine had had a great deal of ring experience and was a very cunning and crafty fighter, using every trick known to the art at that time. Before the finish of the fight his trickery put him in very bad favor with the spectators. He pulled one of his little tricks in the third round. We clinched, and he threw me, and, as we fell, he managed to catch me a nasty blow in the pit of the stomach with his knee which, to the onlookers, looked like an accident, but which I knew was nothing of the sort. However, I evened the score between us in the fourth round by breaking his nose with a right-handed cross counter, and every round after that was mine, but, try as I would, my blows always just fell short of his jaw, thus preventing me from delivering a knockout.

Early in the fight my seconds had noticed McAlpine's seconds putting something into his hands, and, when the fifth

round was called, they appealed to the referee to make him open up his hands. This the referee did and we found that McAlpine, all through the fight, had been gripping a small ball of oakum in either hand. This was a favorite trick of the ring in those days, the idea being that something in the hand on which to fasten the grip hardened the fist and made the blows more deadly. Needless to say, McAlpine was requested to dispense with his balls of oakum. However, in the eighth round, I suffered another set-back. I had delivered a hard right for McAlpine's head, missing him. I immediately let drive an uppercut with my left intending to catch him on the jaw but he ducked so low that I struck his forehead instead and broke my left hand. Of course I kept all knowledge of my helplessness to myself, not even telling my seconds, but from then on I merely bluffed with my left hand, doing all the real work with my right. So we continued until the fifteenth round and I was still trying vainly to find McAlpine's jaw. Finally, being completely fed up with McAlpine and his trickery, I decided to retaliate with a few tricks of my own. So, when the fifteenth round was called, I walked out with my left hand extended and my right posed a little farther back than usual. Then I called to McAlpine "Your seconds are throwing up the sponge in your corner." I must have caught him off his guard, for he turned his head for just the fraction of a second, but that was enough for me. Like lightning I delivered a smashing right to his jaw and he crumpled up like a leaf. He was out for twenty minutes. Of course everybody cheered, for, by this time, McAlpine was thoroughly unpopular.

I was declared winner and returned to Chicago where I spent the next six months doctoring up my mutilated hand.

During the six months which I spent idling in Chicago waiting for my hand to heal, Mike Macdonald mapped out a plan whereby my future career as a fighter was to be made much more remunerative than my past had been.

He was well acquainted with the sportsmen in all the surrounding States and he was so confident that I could beat anyone and everyone with whom I might come in contact that he conceived the idea of playing me as a "Dark Horse." His plan was to have me make a tour of the small towns, stopping at each one where there was known to be a good local boxer with enough backing to make a match worth while. In order to bring about the desired match between myself and the local hero, in a casual manner, I would secure a position of some sort in the town, and, at the first opportunity, I would put in an appearance at the town fire hall which invariably proved to be the meeting place of boxing fans. Nearly every evening would see a boxing match of some description going on at the fire hall, and, of course, it was easy for me to "crash in."

Meanwhile, Jimmy Forbes, of Woodstock, Ontario, had been appointed by Macdonald as my manager. To everyone but me he was known as a travelling salesman, but had anyone cared to note the route he followed, they would have found that, curiously enough, he always managed to hit a certain town at the same time as I did. His business was to strike up an acquaintance with the backers of the local boxer. Casually, in the course of conversation, he would mention that he had seen a young man boxing at the fire hall whom he would back against any man in town. In this way he would lead up to the desired match. The matches were always in private without any previous advertising, so that only a chosen few attended. Our greatest difficulty was in securing a fair referee, as most townsmen were likely to favor the town representative. We always found, however, that we could depend on Macdonald to arrange this part of the business. These fights netted us a lot of money, what with stake money, bets, etc. As a rule, ten days was the limit of my stay in any one town. At the end of that time, the fight over, I would quit my job and go to the next town, where I would repeat the performance.

In this manner, I spent several years, during which time I took part in over fifty fights, without losing any.

In the summer of 1876, I found myself in St. Paul, Minnesota, and it was there that I again met my four mysterious friends of the McAlpine fight on Bloody Island. I ran into them one day in a saloon on Wabashaw Street, owned by a friend of mine, whom I had come to visit. After exchanging a few common-places with them, I enquired their names in order to introduce them to my friend. Two of them gave the name of Howard, the names given by the other two I do not recollect. At any rate I soon found out that none had given his right name, for, in three days time a robbery and murder took place at the Northfield Bank and these four men were identified as the robbers. They were none other than Frank and Jesse James and Bob and Cole Younger. The James boys made their getaway but Bob Younger was badly wounded and his horse shot from under him early in the chase. Cole, of course, would not leave his brother, so he tied him to his horse behind him. The James boys tried to persuade him to desert Bob but he would not, so they parted, the James' going on ahead, leaving Cole and Bob to fight it out alone. Somehow they managed to elude their pursuers for about 150 miles but they were finally cornered in a swamp at Madelia, Minnesota. They put up a brave fight and held the posse at bay for over twenty-four hours until their ammunition gave out. When the posse noticed that they were no longer putting up a defence, they went in and took them. Both had fainted from loss of blood. Cole Younger was shot in about twenty-five places, but, miraculously, was

still living. Bob also was living though pretty badly done up. They were taken to Mankato, Minnesota, where the father of the present Mayo Brothers of Rochester attended to their wounds. When sufficiently recovered, they were tried and sentenced to life imprisonment at Stillwater.

## CHAPTER VII

**I**N 1876 Joe Colborn opened up a saloon in New York on Fourteenth and Broadway. His place was just going nicely when a big fellow appeared on the scene one day looking for trouble, and boasting that he would clean the house out. Colborn didn't stop to waste words on him but hit him and he fell, striking his head on the foot railing of the bar. He died several days later as a result of the injury to his head. Colborn was arrested, tried and convicted of manslaughter, and was sent up the river to Sing Sing for ten years, thus abruptly ending his career as a fighter. He was released in 1884, eight years after his imprisonment, two years having been deducted from his sentence as a reward for good behavior. He came out a broken-down, grey headed old man, with shattered health. He never fought again.

In 1877 Joe Goss came to the United States from England and issued a challenge to anyone in the United States to match with him. His challenge was accepted by Paddy Ryan of Troy, New York. Ryan was a product of the Erie Canal, like myself and McCoole. The match took place at Wheeling, Virginia, in 1878, Ryan winning in 84 rounds after four hours of fighting. It was a hard-fought, desperate battle.

It was about this time, 1878, or shortly before, that news began to circulate of a wonderful newcomer to the fighting world, reputed to be a marvel, John Lawrence Sullivan by name, known as "The Boston Strong Boy." He had had several bouts around Boston and each time got his man with little effort. My first meeting with him occurred in '78.

I will first describe this wonderful "Strong Boy," his appearance, character, etc., as I saw them. At his best, from 1878 to 1883, in my opinion, he could easily have trimmed Peter Jackson, Jim Corbett, Frank Slavin, Bob Fitzsimmons, Jim Jeffries or Jack Johnson. A great many people hold an exaggerated idea of Sullivan's size and strength. In reality, he was only 5 ft. 10 $\frac{3}{4}$  ins. in his stocking feet, and, in 1878, weighed 170 lbs. When he fought Ryan in 1882 for the championship, however, he weighed 187 lbs. and was twenty-four years of age. His feet and hands were rather smaller than the average. His fingers were short, but, for all that, solid and very strong, for in all of his four fights with bare knuckles, the only injury which his hands suffered was a broken thumb.

He had a wonderfully well shaped head and very fine features for a man, strong, firm jaw, strong white teeth and wide apart dark eyes, full of fire. When in fighting togs, the most noticeable part of him was his back where the muscles played under the skin like whipcord and rippled from his neck clear to his waist. The muscles covering his solar plexus formed a series of ridges like steel which rendered him practically invulnerable. He was as lithe as a cat and his cleverness at dodging was vouched for by the unmarred condition of his face and head after his hectic career. He could run a hundred yards in less than eleven seconds. In the ring, when time was called, he always left his chair like a shot out of a gun, ready and eager for the fray. The impression he gave was one of boundless vitality. Any ordinary man was forced to run to keep pace with his walk and I can't remember ever having seen him walk up stairs in the approved manner, he always took them four or five steps at a time on the run. His whole body seemed to be set on springs. A dozen times or more I have seen him stop a runaway team when everyone else stood looking helplessly on. Once in Detroit in 1880, a runaway occurred at the corner of Jefferson and Woodward Avenues, in the busiest section of the town. The runaway team belonged to General Russell A. Alger, then a wealthy lumberman of Michigan and later Governor of Michigan. He had been driving along Woodward Avenue in a double-seated "buggy" with a high spirited team and with him were his wife and daughter. Having occasion to enter a store, he left his wife to hold the team until his return. Suddenly a newspaper blew across the street startling the horses. In a moment they were tearing down the street like mad and Mrs. Alger, despite frantic efforts, had completely lost control of them. People on all sides were rushing to places of safety out of the way of the maddened beasts; not so Sullivan! With a spring he was off the sidewalk and into the roadway, where he managed to get a grip on the bridle of the near horse as the team flew past. He was completely swept from his feet but only for an instant. Almost immediately he regained his grip on Mother Earth, and, throwing all his weight on the bridle, brought the team to a stop in less than forty feet. Mrs. Alger had fainted and the daughter was in tears. The relieved and grateful father rushed up and asked Sullivan his name, but Sullivan turned away, saying, "Oh, that's all right." Alger turned to a plain clothes man who had recently appeared and gave him instructions to follow Sullivan until he found out his name and address. In this way Alger got the information he wanted and that night, at the Russell House where Sullivan was stopping, he, Sullivan, received a letter of thanks from Alger together with a cheque for \$200.00 which Alger asked him to accept as a token of his gratitude.

This was only one of many such feats which I saw Sullivan perform. His hands and head co-operated beautifully at all

times. Besides this, he was a natural born fighter, and absolutely fearless, which is the best recommendation I can give him. His left hand was just as deadly as his right and his blows always came straight from the shoulder with the full weight of his body behind them. He was never known to lose his head in a tight place and he always fought a clean fight.

## CHAPTER VIII

**F**IYE days after the runaway incident in Detroit, Sullivan again distinguished himself as a life-saver. It was Sunday and the Steamer "City of Detroit" was giving an excursion to Put-in-Bay, a summer resort about half way between Detroit and Toledo, on Lake Erie. The programme for the day consisted of sports of all kinds, including rowing and swimming contests and a baseball game of which Sullivan was to be the umpire. Among the passengers on the steamer were several colored ladies with their children. As the boat was nearing its destination, a wind sprang up creating quite a heavy sea. Sullivan had gone to his stateroom near the afterdeck to change into his baseball costume. Suddenly the boat which was a side-wheeler with a wide companionway running all the way around the middle deck, gave a lurch and a cry arose, "Woman overboard!" Immediately the steamer was brought to a stop and the crew made frantic efforts to lower one of the lifeboats but the ropes became tangled in the pulley and the crew had to continue the frantic struggle while the precious moments flew. Suddenly Sullivan, who had heard the cry while in his stateroom, rushed to the after-deck, took in the situation at a glance, and, without the slightest hesitation, leaped overboard after the luckless woman who was none other than one of the several colored ladies and who still clasped her year-old baby in her arms. With a few swift strokes he reached her, and, grasping her in one arm, fought his way back toward the boat with the other. Meanwhile, after a lot of trouble, the crew had managed to lower the lifeboat and Sullivan and his burden were picked up and carried back to safety. None of the three suffered any ill effects from their terrifying experience, but everyone well knew that if Sullivan had not come so promptly to the rescue, both the woman and her baby would have been beyond help before the lifeboat could have reached them. Needless to say, Sullivan was the hero of the day and his brave deed was not soon forgotten. Besides his natural fearlessness and many other good qualities, Sullivan was always kind hearted and generous with everyone.

Even as early as 1878, Sullivan was a strong advocate of glove fighting as he considered bare-knuckle fighting too brutal for true sport. His ambition was to see the ring uplifted and its standards raised to a good deal higher plane than those then prevailing.

In 1879 he challenged Paddy Ryan to fight him for the championship of America but Ryan evaded the issue by telling him to go and get himself a reputation and then maybe he would consider him a worthy opponent. Previous to this, in 1878, Sullivan had won three easy battles, the first with Steve Taylor if New York, a heavy-weight, the second with Mike Donovan, and the third with Tommy Chandler, all three of whom were good men. Not one of them, however, lasted a full two rounds with Sullivan. Shortly after these three victories, Billy Madden, a lightweight of those days, and William Muldoon, a famous wrestler, came to the front. Muldoon advised Madden to get himself the position of manager to Sullivan which he promptly did. These two men, Muldoon and Madden, guided all of Sullivan's early successes.

In 1879, Joe Goss, who had fought Paddy Ryan for the championship in 1878, was giving boxing exhibitions at Cambridge, Mass., offering \$100 to any man who could stay four rounds with him. Sullivan was then in Boston. Hearing of Goss' bravado, he and Madden went to Cambridge to see what it was all about. Before the end of the first evening, Sullivan accepted Goss' challenge, scoring a neat knockout in three rounds. This fight really started Sullivan on the road to the championship. His next battle took place at Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1880. His opponent was Professor John Donaldson, a very clever boxer weighing about 180 pounds. Both men wore hard gloves and the fight took place on the Cincinnati race track, governed by Marquis of Queensbury rules, the same as those now in use. Donaldson put up a good fight and gave Sullivan a run for his money, but, after eight hard-fought rounds, the "Boston Strong Boy" brought the battle to an end by a knockout and Donaldson spent the next six weeks in the hospital mending his broken ribs.

Immediately following this fight, Sullivan went to Chicago and at "Battery D," a soldiers' training hall, fought and conquered my brother, Jack Burns, in three rounds. My brother, at this time, stood 6 ft. 7 $\frac{1}{4}$  ins., and weighed in condition, 235 lbs., so he looked a husky proposition for Sullivan to tackle. However, to everyone's surprise, the "Strong Boy" again proved his worth and ended the battle by a blow which knocked Burns unconscious, and, at the same time, broke his jaw. He also was conveyed to a hospital.

The next night, at the same place, Sullivan scored a victory over Captain James H. Dalton, a very tall man quite a good deal heavier than Sullivan. When the fight was over, Dalton, besides being unconscious, was suffering from four broken ribs and, once more, medical attention was called for. As the ambulance left taking Dalton to the hospital, a rumor went around that Sullivan had killed Dalton, and in less than no

time a crowd had gathered outside, clamoring for revenge on Sullivan. Some of Sullivan's friends came to him in his dressing room and told him not to leave the building until a police escort had been secured to take him to his hotel as the mob outside was getting dangerous. Sullivan refused to listen to this well meant advice but instead, as soon as he was dressed, calmly walked out the door and faced the mob. Then he proceeded to elbow his way through and his absolute fearlessness and the sheer force of his personality overawed the mob and held them back to let him pass. Unbelievable though it may seem, not one man lifted a hand to harm him though a few moments before they had all been shouting for revenge.

The next day Sullivan visited Burns and Dalton in the hospital and gave each man \$100 for putting up such a good fight. In about six weeks time both men had fully recovered.

The third night Sullivan was scheduled to fight Jack O'Donnell, but that worthy had evidently seen and heard too much of Sullivan's prowess, so he quietly disappeared. When the time for the fight arrived, he was nowhere to be found, so Sullivan won that fight by default.

Having exhausted his list of Chicago opponents, Sullivan went back to New York where he once more challenged Ryan for the championship, but Ryan stalled him off with the same excuse as before, namely, that he should go and get himself a reputation before he deemed himself capable of fighting with the champion. Ordinarily this refusal on Ryan's part would have rendered him very unpopular with the people, but the owner of the leading sporting newspaper, Richard K. Fox, of the *Police Gazette*, had a spite against Sullivan and took every opportunity to ridicule and make sport of him. Consequently Ryan was given strong backing in his refusals to fight Sullivan. Sullivan bided his time and, meanwhile, in the fall of 1880, was matched with John Flood of New York. Flood was a huge man, known as "The Bowery Terror," and a very worthy fighter. The match took place in private and the fighters wore kid gloves. This time a barge with a tug was chartered and the fighters, together with about two hundred spectators, travelled up the river to Yonkers, about four miles from the outskirts of New York. The fight took place at night on the barge which was draped with canvas on the sides in such a way as to conceal the lights as it was known that a police tug was searching for them to put a stop to the fight and arrest the participants. In this way they avoided observation and the fight went on without interruption. Sullivan knocked Flood out in three rounds and it was two hours before he came to as his head had struck heavily on the boards when he fell. The referee, a fellow by the name of Al. Smith, declared Sullivan the winner, whereupon Sullivan stepped over to the sidelines where

Paddy Ryan, the then champion, was sitting—an interested spectator. "Well, Paddy," said he, "are you ready for yours tonight?" "If you are, get in here." Ryan shook his head and said "No." With that the spectators, who, of course, had heard the whole conversation, jeered and hooted, and it was largely the position taken by this small crowd of people on this occasion that later forced Ryan into a match with Sullivan.

Sullivan returned to Boston and, in a very few days was again matched, this time to fight with George Godfrey, a wonderful colored pugilist of that time. The stakes were \$500 a side and the Crib Club of Boston was to be the scene of the fight, which was to take place in January, 1881. This club was authorized to stage six round fights without the intervention of the law but the "dyed-in-the-wool" sports who were intending to witness the Sullivan-Godfrey skirmish were not satisfied with this. They wanted a fight to the finish with hard gloves so it was mutually agreed that the fight should take place in private before a chosen few unbeknown to the police. The night appointed found the club packed to the doors at 7.30 with all the members of the club present. As soon as the last man arrived, the doors were locked and 7.45 found both men stripped and in the ring ready for the fray. The referee, Patsy Sheppard by name, had just been chosen, and together with the two fighters and their seconds, were holding a conference in the centre of the ring. Just then a steady hammering on the door commenced, followed by a loud authoritative voice calling, "Open this door in the name of the law." No one offered to comply with this command, so, without further ceremony, the door was burst open and in swarmed about twenty representatives of law and order headed by Chief Haggerty. They jumped into the ring and informed the fighters that no fight would take place that night, so the disappointed and angry spectators were forced to disperse unsatisfied. Before leaving the ring, however, Sullivan made a declaration to which he adhered rigidly all the rest of his life. He stated that he would never again box or make a match to fight a colored man. He kept his word. All who heard him knew he was sincere and from that time on no colored man ever challenged him.

In the spring of 1881, Sullivan realized his heart's desire. Through public sentiment and opinion, Ryan was forced to make a match with him. The arrangements were made in June, 1881, and the stakes set at \$2,500 a side. James Keenan of Boston backed Sullivan and Richard F. Fox through his sporting editor, William E. Harding, furnished the money for the champion. The two men and their respective backers met in New York at the Gilsey House and chartered a tug, paying \$25.00 for it, to take them out in the harbor beyond the three mile limit, to sign articles of agreement, for a fight to take place

February 7th, 1882, south of the Mason and Dixon Line, the exact location to be chosen by the referee at a later date. By holding this meeting beyond the three mile limit they complied with the New York State law which forbade aiding and abetting a prize fight. The Mason and Dixon Line above mentioned is a dividing line between the Northern and Southern States and the reason so many fights in the early days were held south of this line was because the Southern States did not hold it a felony, but only a misdemeanor to fight without gloves.

Ryan and Sullivan both started training around the first of December and continued right up to the date set for the fight. Ryan's training quarters were at Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, and Sullivan's at Vicksberg, Mississippi. Mississippi City had finally been chosen as the scene of the battle.

I was at this time living in Buffalo, New York, and, in November of 1881, I received a letter from James Keenan of Boston, Sullivan's backer, stating that he had heard rumors that, through the powerful influence in New York, Sullivan would not be allowed to win even if he could. Rumor had it that Ryan's friends in Troy, N.Y., iron moulders by trade, were going down in a body two hundred strong to see that Ryan won either by fair means or foul. This story was given considerable credence, for it was known that this same place of Troy, twenty-five years previously, had been the home of a former champion by the name of John Morrissey who had been saved from defeat at the hands of Yankee Sullivan in 1848 at Long Point, Canada, by just such dirty methods as the people now proposed to use in defence of Ryan. The object of Keenan's letter was to ask me to pick out twenty men on whom I could depend for rough and tumble fighting, but, at the same time, he instructed me not to let Sullivan hear of our plans for the safeguarding of the bets. I proceeded to follow his instructions, writing to twenty men of my acquaintance and requesting their co-operation. Nineteen replied favorably, stating that they were intending to see the fight anyway and would be at my service. Only one man refused me, and, strangely enough, that one was my brother, Jack Burns, who had suffered a knock-out at the hands of Sullivan in Chicago in 1880. He stated that he was going to the fight all right but would hold himself absolutely neutral should any fracas arise. He also stated that Sullivan didn't need any protection, that he would easily lick Ryan and would take on all of his friends one at a time afterwards and lick them too. So that was that!

My nineteen men were all good rough and tumble fighters. Among them were two Frenchmen, one Paulette Cicero of Alpena, Mich., the other Joseph Fournier of Bangor, Mich. Others were Jim Murphy of Bay City, Mich.; Jim Turnbull also of Bay City; Silver Jack Driscoll of Saginaw, Mich.; Jack Sterling

of Muskeegan, Mich.; and Tom Thompson of Tawas, Michigan. The rest of the men were friends of mine from Detroit and Buffalo. We assembled in New Orleans on the first of February, 1882, a week before the fight, where we held a secret meeting in the St. Charles Hotel. Jim Keenan was present, also Al. Smith of New York. At this meeting we outlined our plan of action. The only thing that Keenan asked was that, should Sullivan be winning, we should see that Ryan's friends did not break up the fight. If Sullivan was losing, let him lose.

One of the most outstanding characters in my rescue gang was the above mentioned Tom Thompson. He was noted for his mighty grip, and more than once he had proved that his reputation was well earned. He was in the lumber business in a small way, having, during the fall and winter months, about fifty men working for him. He kept his own books and generally managed the business himself. Wages for lumberjacks at that time were low—\$25.00 a month and board if a man guaranteed to remain all winter; but, should any man quit before his time was up, he would be paid off at only \$20.00 a month for the time he had worked. This condition was well understood and usually was a strong inducement for a man to work the season through. One winter Thompson had working for him a big husky "bolshevik" who was continually boasting that he would quit at Christmas and that he wouldn't accept any \$20.00 a month for his time either. Following up this boast, when Christmas came, he walked into the office and confronted Thompson. He informed him that he was quitting and he wanted his cheque. Thompson was agreeable and proceeded to make out his cheque for \$60.00, in payment for three months labor. This was contemptuously refused with the ultimatum that if a cheque for \$75.00 was not forthcoming, he, Mr. Lumberjack, would clean out the house. Thompson replied by inviting him to go outside and settle the matter by hand, but reminded him that, before a fight, it was always customary for the opponents to shake on it. He thereupon grasped the fellow by the hand in his iron grip. So great was the pressure that in less than a minute the man was writhing in pain with blood oozing out around his fingernails. No sooner was his hand released, than he turned and ran for the men's bunkhouse, all thoughts of a fight completely forgotten. He did not even return for his cheque, but sent a friend to get it for him.

Thompson gave another exhibition of his strength one day by taking a raw potato, the size of a baseball, and squeezing it in his hands till the pulp ran out between his fingers. You men, who pride yourselves on your strength, just try this stunt—and weep!

But to continue with my narrative.

February 7th, 1882, was a cold and cloudy day. I and my supporters, with numerous other spectators, took the train from New Orleans in the evening of February 6th and arrived in Mississippi City about 7.30 in the morning of February 7th. First thing, we all got busy and pitched the ring on a sod field close to the depot. Before the bulk of the crowd arrived, Ryan's husky supporters, two hundred strong, ranged themselves in a handy position close to the ring back of Ryan's corner on improvised seats which they had constructed by pillaging a nearby lumber pile. I and my nineteen pals took ringside seats, ten of us on either side of the ring. Strange to say, all of those twenty men, though it was very cold, had dispensed with their over-coats. Nine-fifteen saw both Sullivan and Ryan in the ring ready for battle. William E. Harding, sporting editor of the *New York Police Gazette*, handed Ryan \$1,000 to bet on himself. Ryan, with the \$1,000 still in his hand, walked over to Sullivan's corner and placed the bet. James Keenan of Boston thereupon gave Sullivan \$1,000 covering Ryan's money. As Ryan was counting out his money, he dropped three of the bills on the ground through sheer nervousness. Sullivan, on the other hand, counted his in tens and twenties and handed them over to the stakeholder without a tremor. This done, Sullivan turned to Ryan and said, "I have been three years trying to coax you into the squared circle, Ryan, but at last I've succeeded." Ryan's reply was, "You may be sorry." "Paddy," said Sullivan, "I'll lick you in twenty minutes." At this point conversation between the rivals was brought to a close by the referee's order to shake hands. This formality over, they retired to their corners and the signal to start was given. From start to finish, the fight had the appearance of a whirlwind, lasting only eleven minutes, during which time nine rounds were fought under London Prize Ring rules. Every one of the nine rounds was brought to a close by Sullivan knocking Ryan down and the end of the ninth round saw Ryan lying on the ground, a bloody, senseless mass, with three broken ribs and a jaw fractured in two places. No doubt you readers are wondering what Ryan's friends had been doing all this time. I, all along, had been expecting trouble from that quarter, but my fears proved groundless for the men from Troy never lifted a hand to spoil the party. Whether they had an inkling that we were there to insure fair play, or whether, down in their hearts, they couldn't resist seeing a good fight won and lost on the square, will never be known. At any rate, they did not interfere but instead, as Ryan was counted out, rose in a body and said in one voice, "John is a better man than Paddy." With this they returned to their train. I and my nineteen sturdy defenders felt more disappointed than relieved at this tame ending of what we had anticipated as an exciting day.

Going back to the train, a discovery was made which afforded us a little more excitement. Ryan had been carried to his drawing room for doctoring and there it was discovered that, during his absence, some thief had broken in and lifted his wallet containing \$300, also a two carat diamond stud valued at \$200. On hearing of Ryan's loss, a subscription for him was suggested which Sullivan opened by donating \$100. Inside of thirty minutes Ryan was presented with \$500 to reimburse him for his loss.

On arrival in New Orleans, we indulged in a general jollification to celebrate the victory, after which Sullivan and his friends left for New York and Boston. All along the route, at every wayside station, Sullivan was greeted with loud cheers for the "Boston Strong Boy." This marked the beginning of Sullivan's career as the "Champion of Champions." Crowds followed him wherever he went, blocking the traffic and generally creating an uproar. He was the most popular champion ever known and he had the distinction of being the last fighter to win the championship with bare knuckles and the first man to defend his championship with gloves.

In the fall of 1882, Jim Collins, alias Tug Wilson, the English heavyweight champion at that time, was brought over from London by Richard K. Fox to be matched with Sullivan, who was offering \$1,000 to any man who could stay four rounds with him. The fight took place in Madison Square Gardens. Collins stayed the four rounds all right, but put up a wholly defensive battle, continually covering up and running away, but never taking advantage of an opening. During the four rounds, he was knocked down eighteen times and each time took advantage of the full count for a rest period. He won the much coveted prize money, but the whole fight was very unsatisfactory as Sullivan did all the fighting while he merely stood a lot of punishment. Immediately afterwards Collins returned to England.

It was about this time that Sullivan quarrelled with Madden, then his manager. As a result, they dissolved partnership and shortly afterwards, Madden, in the employ of Richard K. Fox, went to England to search for a man to beat Sullivan. He was only one of several men dispatched by Richard K. Fox on similar errands to different parts of the world. Fox was leaving no stone unturned to secure Sullivan's downfall. Before leaving for England, however, Madden first went to Detroit where he interviewed a man by the name of Pat Sheehan, a splendid fighter, but inexperienced in the ring. Sheehan and Sullivan had often boxed together in friendly bouts in Bob Wright's gymnasium on Griswold Street before the days of Sullivan's fame. Sullivan had often remarked that he would rather fight ten Ryans than one Sheehan. Sheehan, however, was well

to do and held a position as Police Commissioner of Detroit, hence had always resolutely refused to enter the ring. Madden was alike unsuccessful in his attempt to induce Sheehan to fight Sullivan, so, discouraged, he sailed for England, there to continue his search.

Meanwhile Richard K. Fox managed to persuade Jim Mace, the ex-champion of England, then in retirement at the age of 42, to come over and try his luck with Sullivan. Mace came over all right, but after his first meeting with Sullivan, he went to Fox and said, "No, Fox, I won't fight him; it would break my heart to have that young fellow knock me out." Whereupon Fox dispatched Mace to Australia to search for some man who would fight Sullivan.

It was about this time that I received a wire from Professor John Donaldson to come to New York as he wanted to see me. I went and was asked by Donaldson if I would like to go to Cape Town, South Africa, with him, as Richard K. Fox was sending him there to try out a man by the name of Bill Cooper with a view to matching him against Sullivan if he proved to be a worthy fighter. This fellow Cooper was supposed to be a direct descendent of the famous Ned Cooper who fought Dan Donnelly, at Kildare, Ireland, about three hundred years ago.

I was quite willing to embark on a trip with such pleasurable possibilities. We left in the winter of 1883 for London, England, where we immediately took passage for Cape Town. Practically all the way from London to Cape Town we gave boxing exhibitions on deck, partly to keep Donaldson in condition, partly for the entertainment of the passengers. So grateful were these people for some interesting diversion, that the day before we arrived at Cape Town, they raised a purse of fifty pounds for us, which the captain presented with the kind regards of all on board.

Three days after our arrival in Cape Town, Cooper came over from Johannesburg to arrange the match. He was a fine looking fellow, very dark, standing 5 ft. 10 ins., and weighing 180 lbs. in condition. All the business we did this first day was to arrange a meeting for the following day to sign articles of agreement for a match with gloves to take place in the Opera House at Capetown in four weeks time between Cooper and Donaldson. A few hours after this first meeting with Cooper, Donaldson suddenly developed a soreness in his side, claiming that he had been bothered with it on and off ever since his battle with Sullivan in 1880. I thought little of it at the time expecting that it was only temporary, but the next morning, the day set for the signing of the articles, his side was still sore and he seemed inclined to abandon the match and return to New York. I reminded him, however, that we had come to find out what kind of a fighter Cooper was and suggested that if he was

unable to fight I would take his place and do the best I could. He was heartily agreeable to this plan, so the articles were made out accordingly.

I weighed only 140 to Cooper's 180, and, considering this difference, I refused to wager any money on the outcome but was willing to fight on the understanding that the winner should take all the gate receipts. Donaldson spent the next four weeks training me while Cooper was doing likewise.

The night of the fight the Opera House was filled. One of the boxes to the left of the stage was occupied by a party of six from Johannesburg, one of whom was Cecil Rhodes, the "Diamond King of South Africa." The referee was Dr. Jamieson, prominent years later as the instigator of the Jamieson Raid in South Africa to capture the Transvaal Free States. My first glimpse of Cooper in ring costume gave me a vacant feeling at the pit of my stomach and I was conscious of an intense desire to be back in little old New York. He was a huge handsome specimen of manhood with powerful muscles and with a mat of thick black hair all over the upper part of his body. The more I looked at him the more my courage ebbed, but I finally pulled myself together and decided to do the worst I could to him.

The first five or six rounds I had a hard time of it. Cooper rushed at me like a gorilla time and time again and I had all I could do to avoid being knocked out. I knew there was no good in running away from his blows; I was there to beat him or at least try to, so all I could do was dodge as much as I could and meet him, when possible, with heavy rights to the jaw. But, try as I would, the only effect my blows seemed to have on him, was to make him fight more savagely. But Cooper made the fatal mistake, common to so many newcomers, he fought so hard at the beginning of the battle that he tired himself out and as soon as I saw he was weakening, I began a heavy attack, giving him no chance to get his second wind. About the fourteenth round, I noticed that his blows were going wild and were delivered swingingly instead of straight from the shoulder. In the fifteenth round, however, he caught me over the ear with his right hand and I felt something crunch. I feared my skull was crushed; but as I rose to my feet, for the blow had knocked me down, I saw Cooper drop his hand to his side and soon after I realized that he had broken his hand. It was his hand that I had heard crunch instead of my own head as I had feared. From then on I gave him no rest, but always seemed to fall just short of a knockout. When the twentieth round was called, Cooper tottered about four steps forward from his corner and collapsed on his face in the centre of the ring without a single blow having been delivered. He was counted out and I was declared winner.

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That night, at the hotel, I was visited by Cecil Rhodes who presented me with a two carat diamond and twenty pounds which he had bet on me. Besides this, I netted about \$1,800 gate receipts which I divided with Donaldson.

For three weeks after this fight, my shoulders and arms were black and blue and I carried around with me a lump the size of a goose egg on the side of my head.

Needless to say, Cooper did not accompany us when we sailed for home.

## CHAPTER IX.

**T**HE years 1883 and 1884 were very busy ones for Sullivan.

His first encounter took place at Buffalo with Jack Steward of London, Ontario, champion heavyweight of Canada, whom Sullivan knocked out in two rounds. His next battle was also short and sweet. This time he again scored a knockout in a two round bout with Professor John Laffin at Madison Square Garden, New York City. This same year Sullivan celebrated the 4th of July by a lively battle with Jimmy Elliot at a New York pleasure ground known as Jones' Woods. Elliot managed to stay with him three rounds when he suffered the same fate as all Sullivan's former opponents.

Later on, in 1883, Billy Madden imported an English fighter by the name of Charlie Mitchell to try his luck with Sullivan. In order to obtain some idea of Mitchell's ability before risking his reputation with Sullivan, Madden matched him with Mike Cleary, at that time a well-known heavyweight boxer. Results proved favorable indeed for Mitchell beat Cleary easily in three rounds. Consequently, Madden proceeded immediately to arrange the desired match with Sullivan. At this time boxing matches in New York City were limited to four rounds, consequently most fights were fast and furious right from the outset. The Mitchell-Sullivan fight took place at Madison Square Garden and drew the biggest crowd ever seen at a boxing match up to that time, totalling about nine thousand persons with gate receipts amounting to \$18,000. It was thought that the peak in gate receipts for affairs of this nature had been reached. Today, \$18,000 would be considered a mere drop in the bucket. Richard Fox of the *Police Gazette*, in an effort to put himself in the limelight, ordered the manufacture of a fancy belt made of gold links and studded with diamonds which was to be the prize for the winner, but Sullivan had not forgotten Fox's past enmity towards himself, and refused flatly to have anything whatever to do with this expensive bauble, saying contemptuously that it was only a dog collar anyhow.

The night of the fight Mitchell sprang a nice little surprise in the very first round. Sullivan, as usual, started out with a rush, expecting Mitchell to dodge but, instead of dodging, Mitchell met Sullivan with a straight left in the pit of the stomach, knocking him flat. He was up again in an instant, however, and proceeded to knock Mitchell all around the ring,

over the ropes and under the ropes. So furious was his onslaught, that the police, under Captain McLaughlin, put an end to the fight in the third round to save Mitchell from further punishment. At the time of Sullivan's knockdown in the first round, the excitement rose to such a pitch that some one hundred spectators suffered the loss or destruction of cherished plug hats through the over-enthusiasm of well-meaning fans.

Shortly after this fight, in 1884, Jim Mace, still hopeful of securing Sullivan's downfall, brought a fighter by the name of Herbert A. Slade, a Maori, over from Sidney, Australia. This fight also took place at Madison Square Garden, Sullivan scoring a knockout after three rounds. The next on the list was a wonderful English fighter from London by the name of Alf. Greenfield, who was matched with Sullivan in the summer of 1884, but who also met his Waterloo after a four round battle. This bout drew another record crowd of almost nine thousand people.

After this victory, Sullivan and his manager, Al. Smith, decided to go on a tour of the principal cities of the United States, giving boxing exhibitions, with a prize of \$1,000 to any man who could stay four rounds with Sullivan. This tour lasted ten months and, during that time, one hundred and one hopefuls endeavored to win the coveted \$1,000, but not one ever succeeded. Sullivan disposed of them all in less than the prescribed four rounds.

The personnel of the staff which accompanied Sullivan was: Joe Lannon of South Boston, heavyweight; Steve Taylor of New York, heavyweight; Pete McCoy of New York, middleweight; George LaBlanche of Boston, middleweight; Jimmy Carrol of Holyoke, Mass; and Patsy Kerrigan of Boston, both lightweights. Frank Moran of Bridgeport, Connecticut, acted as assistant manager and treasurer for the troupe.

At every port of call the party was greeted by full houses. Sullivan, in particular, was royally wined and dined on every occasion, in fact, too much so for his own good. During the seventh month of their tour, they landed at Butte, Montana. Here there was a well-known middleweight by the name of Duncan McDonald. No sooner had the touring party arrived, than McDonald challenged Pete McCoy to fight him in six weeks time for \$1,000 a side. This was to be a fight to the finish with small gloves. At this time, I was in Chicago where I received a wire from Sullivan asking me to come on and take McCoy's place in the show as McCoy would have to remain in Butte to train for his fight with McDonald. I was only too glad to accept. At the same time, Sullivan also added Mike Donovan of New York to his program. Each boxer was paid \$50.00 a week plus expenses, which was big money in those days. We eventually landed at Portland, Oregon. On the night of our

exhibition there, Moran received a wire from a banker at Astoria, Oregon, ninety miles down the Columbia River, asking what guarantee of gate receipts would be required for Sullivan to go there, as they had a strong man who was anxious to win the \$1,000 prize offered by Sullivan. Moran replied, "\$1,500 guarantee," and the answer came back, "O.K."

Our instructions were to leave by the next boat and we all embarked together with about two hundred fight fans from Portland. On arrival, we discovered that the man who was to be Sullivan's opponent was a Greek fisherman by the name of Joseph Silvest, who stood six feet and weighed 250 lbs. He was a mass of muscle and was noted for his great power. So powerful was he that, at low tide, he used to drag his fishing smack over the Columbia River Bar unaided, a task which generally required the combined strength of at least three or four ordinary men. The day before the match, Silvest, confident of his own superiority, yet a little afraid of what he might do to Sullivan, went to the Prosecuting Attorney of Astoria County and secured from him a document exonerating him from prosecution in case he killed Sullivan. He also went to the Sheriff and secured from him a similar document. With these two promises of security in hand, he proceeded to tell all his friends to be on deck to watch him flatten Sullivan. He need not have gone to the trouble of so much advertising, for that night the hall was packed. Every man in Astoria witnessed the fight and the fishermen wagered all they had on Silvest.

The first round was fairly exciting, but in the second Sullivan straightened Silvest's head with a left handed punch, then crossed with a mighty right to the jaw. Silvest fell in a heap and it took him several hours to regain consciousness. He never did fully recover from that terrific blow for, in about six months' time, he was taken to an insane asylum at Salem, Oregon, and, in less than a year's time, he was dead. One fellow, a Greek bootblack, who had a stand in Portland, lost \$2,700 as a result of this fight with Silvest, and about four hundred Greek fishermen lost all they had.

In 1885, Sullivan landed back in New York and was matched with Dominick McCaffery of Philadelphia. They fought eight rounds at Cincinnati, Ohio; Sullivan, as usual, winning.

In 1886 Sullivan fought another successful eight round battle with Jack Burke, an Irish lad, at the Washington Race Track, in Chicago. That same year, he also fought Patsy Cardiff, "The Peoria Illinois Giant," at the Washington Skating Rink in Minneapolis. This time Sullivan ended the battle after six rounds, not without injury, however, for in the second round, he broke his left arm about three inches above the wrist

after a hard blow to Cardiff's head. But Sullivan never flinched and kept his misfortune a secret until the six rounds were over. This match was declared a draw.

In his next battle, Sullivan was forced to defend his championship against Jake Kilrain in a long drawn out and wearisome battle lasting seventy-six rounds. Sullivan won eventually, but I may say that he was not, by fifty per cent. the man he had been at the time he first won the championship in 1882. The mighty man was slipping fast. The wear and tear of his numerous battles and the gay life he led had left their mark. But he still had the old fighting spirit, though his mind and muscle failed to co-operate as in days gone by.

There is one incident of the Sullivan-Kilrain fight which stands out very prominently in my memory. I remember it was a very hot day in July and everyone, with the exception of the two fighters, had brought along umbrellas as a protection from the sun. In about the fortieth round, Sullivan took sick very suddenly. Kilrain suggested that they quit and call it a draw but Sullivan ignored all such overtures and his only retort was "Come and fight, you loafer." So they went at it again and, in the seventy-sixth round, Sullivan succeeded in knocking Kilrain out. He remained unconscious for several minutes. When he finally came to, all the crowd had left with the exception of four or five of his admirers, one of whom was Charlie Mitchell, Kilrain's second. Kilrain gazed around dismayed and asked, "Where are all my friends?" then burst into tears.

Shortly after this, Sullivan made a trip to Ireland where he visited the famous Dublin Castle and went through the usual performance of kissing the blarney stone. While in Ireland, he was matched with Charlie Mitchell for \$10,000 a side. The fight took place at Chantilly, France, under London Prize Ring rules. It lasted thirty-nine rounds during which Sullivan was kept occupied trying in vain to catch Mitchell who continually dodged him. It finally ended in a draw. At the conclusion, both men were arrested and fined five thousand francs each. Sullivan then returned to New York.

In 1890, Sullivan made a trip to Sidney and Melbourne, stopping off at Honolulu and Auckland, New Zealand. After six months of this, he returned to the United States. There he went on the stage for about a year as the star actor in a play called "Honest Hearts and Willing Hands," written by a well-known writer of that time.

In 1891, he again appeared in the ring, this time to fight James Corbett with gloves for the championship. The fight took place at New Orleans on September 10th, under Marquis of Queensbury rules. It was here that Sullivan finally met his defeat, thus ending the fighting career of the greatest Roman of

them all. The fight had lasted twenty-one rounds when Sullivan suddenly crumpled up under a shower of blows. He was not knocked out but was too exhausted to rise. Once he tried to raise himself by the ropes but fell back helpless. Nature had taken its course and he was forced to surrender to the superiority of youth. Corbett was ten years his junior. Sullivan himself was an old man at this time, his hair heavily streaked with grey, although he was only thirty-four years of age. But he was no quitter. When he was able to speak, after being assisted to his chair, the first words he uttered were, "I am glad that the championship has been won by an American." So ended a long and famous fighting career.

I often talked to Sullivan both before his downfall and after and he used to say that the happiest days of his life were when he was a boy from ten to fifteen years of age helping his father dig sewers and cellars with a spade in Boston, and, in the evenings, playing ball on the Boston Common with a bunch of scrappy boys.

Strange to say, in my travels, I have met over twenty men who claim to be brothers of John L., but of course that is all "bunk." He never had a brother. He did, however, have one sister, Mrs. Lennon, two years his junior, who is today living in Roxbury, Massachusetts. I have also met about a thousand or so men claiming to be cousins of the "Mighty John" but this also is "bunk" as he had no uncles in this country.

Among Sullivan's intimate friends were such noted people as James Garfield who was elected President of the United States in 1880, and assassinated a year later; Grover Cleveland, elected President of the United States in 1884, missed one term, and was re-elected in 1892. Cleveland, I may say, was one of Sullivan's most intimate friends and, whenever Sullivan visited Washington, he never failed to spend a pleasant hour with him. Theodore Roosevelt, also President, was another true friend of the big fighting man and Sullivan had a standing invitation to lunch with him at the White House at any time.

To sum up, Sullivan held the championship for ten years, seven months and three days. He won it on February 7th, 1882 and lost it to Jim Corbett on September 10th, 1892, at New Orleans.

## WHEN DYNAMITE WAS USED TO BLAST JOHN L'S GRAVE

(Extract from *Literary Digest*)

TWO heads came together with a frightful impact. The young San Francisco reporter, who was also an artist, had come for his first personal glimpse of the great prize-fighter he had worshipped from a distance for years. As the young man entered the dressing-room, the old lion of the ring bellowed, "Come here, young fellow, and I'll show you how to lick an ornery bartender." The reporter could never be afraid of his hero, so he approached, only to have his ears grabbed and to receive that fearful head bumping. "That's the way to lick an ornery bartender, young fellow." When Hype Igoe, now of the New York *World*, came to, John L. Sullivan was winking at him from behind Saturn. Mr. Igoe's worship of old John L. began when he lived, as a boy of seven, in the Santa Cruz Mountains of California. "Perhaps I got the first real thrill of my life," he writes in his daily column, "Pardon My Glove," of the historic bout between Sullivan and Jake Kilrain, "as I sat with many mountain neighbors before the big log fire, as my mother read the dramatic story of that memorable seventy-five-round battle. It held me breathless. My blood ran ice and hot lead alternately. To my bare-foot boy way of thinking, John L. Sullivan represented power, bravery, conquest." Years passed. Other ring heroes came along—Fitzsimmons, Jeffries, Johnson". Then, Mr. Igoe writes:

Sullivan, now a respected and still beloved teetotaler, died suddenly on his little farm in New England. I would go to John L. Sullivan's wake. I would be at the end of the trail. I told the then managing editor of *The World* that I wanted to do the story. He wasn't enthusiastic, and when I told him that I'd pay my own expenses he laughed and told me to make the trip to Boston if I thought that much of the story. He didn't know. He hadn't been at the head of the trail.

It was in the dead of winter. All that remained of the great warrior rested in the parlor of his sister's home at Roxbury, Massachusetts. His sister, a Mrs. Lennon, was as striking in appearance as was her famous brother. Snow-white hair covered her splendid head, but from beneath black eyebrows blazed the famous Sullivan eyes. There were no eyes like them in all the world.

I was on the trail. I camped with the other neighbors behind the old-fashioned kitchen stove, roaring hot, as these quaint characters told the stories of John L.'s career. Back of the stove, on the wall, hung a framed collection of the greatest John Sullivan photographs I ever saw. There he was, with William Muldoon, both in their corduroy road suits, little sawed-off canes in their hands, ready for a jog. There was Sullivan the youngster, Sullivan the budding champion, Sullivan the champion, wearing the silk topper he sported when he slapped Prince Edward on the back and told him that, having heard of him, he was "glad to meet you."

Mr. Lennon took me up-stairs to dig into John L.'s treasure chest. It was a battered old travelling trunk. It was that big that it looked like John L.'s trunk. Belts, canes, tights, old prints, even the massive gold watch that Edward, Prince of Wales, had given him came to light. The watch was a glorious triumph of the watchmaker's craftsmanship. The royal coat of arms was worked in colors on the dial. Then Lennon picked up a dried, muddy pair of fighting shoes. I turned them over in my hands and saw the tremendous spikes on the soles. Mud and dead grass still clung to the spikes.

"John L. wore those on the turf at Chantilly, France, when he met Charlie Mitchell," said Lennon in a whisper that was reverent. In a deepest, glass-covered frame was the picture of a little lad about three. There were white wax flowers inside the glass. "John Lawrence Sullivan, Jr.," said Lennon. "He died just after this was taken." We replaced the treasures and went down-stairs.

Mr. Igoe went in and looked at the old hero. Hair snow white, his great flowing white moustache wisping lifelike across the powerful face, he describes him as he writes further:

There he lay—in evening dress—his great right fist resting on his tremendous chest, drab and still but tightly clinched, defiant even in death! It had echoed around the world! A Chinese green jade ring seemed to accentuate the unusual color of that once mighty fist. I closed my eyes, it seemed, and my memories took me back down the trail—to the little log cabin on the mountainside at Felton, and in the smoke of that big fireplace I again saw that fist—the fight with Kilrain on the turf under the broiling sun. I was fascinated by that fist. It seemed like the clapper of some great bell that had boomed the brazen message of America's glory as a fighting nation from one end of the earth to the other. As I looked upon him I couldn't help thinking that, with all his faults, John L. Sullivan had been a keystone, one of the really great Americans of history.

Beside his casket I sat with Mrs. Lennon and told her the story of the beginning of the trail in that little log cabin in the Santa Cruz Mountains. As we conversed, an old man came in, looked long and sorrowfully at the face of John L. He was of the old Irish school. His faded green cutaway was edged with braid. He selected an old-fashioned rocker for his roost, and as he settled back he drew from his pocket a plug of smoking tobacco. Carefully he cut chips from it and rolled them between his palms. Then he fished from his pocket a small, short-stemmed, black, clay dudeen. He filled it, lighted it and with it riding upside down between his teeth he folded his hands across his stomach, leaned back and began to rock back and forth as he slowly repeated: "My poor bi—my poor, poor bi."

I asked Mrs. Lennon who he was. She never had seen him before. Just one of the many millions who knew, or thought they knew, John L. Sullivan.

Morning came and the most memorable of Roxbury's funerals. Little children sang in the choir of the old church on the hill. Zero weather. They had carefully sanded all the line of march. En route, fire companies stood bareheaded before their red machines, draped in black crepe; bells tolling a farewell to John. They buried him on the side of a little knoll. The ground was frozen hard, and it seemed a fitting end that they were compelled to dynamite a resting-place in the earth for John L. Sullivan. A big man at my side whispered: "It was just as John would have had it." I looked up into the face of Jake Kilrain. He was stooped, snow about his temples. His kindly eyes were filled with tears. It was the end of the trail.

## CHAPTER X.

**N**OW that we have followed John L. through his career to its end, we will go back and trace up a few other noted men of that day.

I witnessed a very interesting fight in Chicago in 1878 for the middleweight championship, between Johnny Files and Tommy Chandler. It was fought under Marquis of Queensbury rules in a basement on Conger Street right in the City of Chicago and lasted eighteen rounds, ending by both men being knocked out. The stakes were \$500 a side. The men were tired when, just at the same moment, both feinted with their left hands and crossed with their rights, each landing on the other's jaw at the same time. They crumpled up simultaneously. Chandler came to first after about twenty seconds, and rose to his feet ready to fight, whereupon the referee, George Syler, whom I have mentioned before, immediately gave him the decision.

In the fall of 1883, while in Chicago with Edward Hanlon, the championship sculler from Toronto, and Fred Plasted, the oarsman, I, together with Hanlon, walked into the Palmer House and there, standing at the desk, was a very familiar figure. At the same time this person saw me and beckoned me over. This was my good friend Samuel Clemens, the Mark Twain of my boyhood days on the Mississippi. After introducing him to my friend Hanlon, we proceeded to have a chat. Clemens had become really famous by this time, being the author of several extremely popular humorous novels. He told us he was having a small banquet of about twenty people at the Palmer House that night and wanted both Hanlon and myself to come. We both demurred, making different excuses, but it was no "go." Clemens insisted, saying he wanted me to meet some friends of his. So we gave in and appeared at the Palmer House at ten o'clock that night. During the evening, I met several prominent editors, poets, actors, actresses, etc., principal among them were Henry Waterson, editor of the *Louisville Courier Journal*; William O'Grady, editor of the *Atlanta Georgia Constitution*; James Whitcombe Riley, the poet; Waukine Miller, the poet of the Sierras; John McCullough, the great tragedienne, who later went suddenly insane at McVicker's Theatre in Chicago in 1886; Richard Mansfield, well-known scholar of Shakespeare; also Nat Goodwin, Lillian Russell, the actress, and Rose Coughlin, also an actress, who is now living on Long Island near New York City. This Rose Coughlin, by the

way, is an aunt of the little girl who played the part of Rose Marie in "Abie's Irish Rose" in Edmonton in the fall of 1927. I had a long talk with this niece of hers after the show. One guest who was invited to this banquet but who failed to appear was Kathleen Tingley, a very religious theosophist. When declining the invitation she stated that her faith would not permit her to attend functions where champagne was served. She is now living at Point Loma, nine miles from San Diego, California. Last, but far from least among the list of guests, was the world-famous writer, Ella Wheeler, later Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

But to continue with my record of famous fighting men.

In 1883, two other noted men first made a name for themselves in the ring.

The first of these was Jack Dempsey, at that time a lightweight who later developed into a middleweight in 1885. He was known as the "Nonpareil." After winning several battles, Dempsey finally lost the middleweight championship to Bob Fitzsimmons at New Orleans in the fall of 1890. The most notable of Dempsey's battles were the following: His victory over Joe Ellingsworth at New York in twenty-eight rounds; his successful twelve round battle with Geo. LaBlanche, a celebrated marine, on Long Island across from New York. He also fought with Johnny Regan. During this fight, it was necessary to move the ring because it was situated so near the beach that the tide rose and swamped them. Before the ring was moved, they fought forty-four rounds and, in the new ring, thirty-four rounds, making a total of seventy-six rounds, before Dempsey was finally declared winner. These battles were always with kid gloves and under Marquis of Queensbury rules.

Dempsey fought a second battle with LaBlanche at San Francisco, this time losing after thirty-two rounds. He lost by a fluke or what is known today as the "pivot blow." This blow has been barred and considered a foul ever since. However, the middleweight championship was not at stake in this battle as LaBlanche weighed 165 lbs. and could not make the middle-weight limit.

Dempsey's next battle was with Billy McCarthy, an Australian middleweight, and took place at San Francisco in 1889. Dempsey won after a twenty-eight round fight with gloves.

The other fighter before mentioned who was at that time establishing a name for himself, was Jack McAuliffe, a recognized lightweight champion. He issued a challenge to any lightweight in the United States and was accepted by Billy Fraser of Sommerville, Mass. McAuliffe won this bout in 22 rounds, then proceeded to clean up on Jimmy Carrol in a twenty-five round battle. He also beat Harry Gilmour, lightweight champion of Canada, in 28 rounds. He later fought 84 rounds

with gloves with Jim Carney, England's lightweight champion, at Revere Beach, Mass. This match was declared a draw. He was then matched to fight Billy Myres, "The Streator Cyclone", of Streator, Ill. This battle took place in 1889 at Myres' home and so much money was wagered on Myres, that a special train was run out from Chicago headed by Dick Roche. Dick Roche was McAuliffe's principal backer and Alf. Kennedy was backer for Myres. The fight was staged in the big skating rink at Streator. The tender-hearted sheriff and his assistant were bent on stopping the fight, after the ring was ready, and just before the men entered the ring, White, the assistant, opened his mouth to orate but only got as far as: "In the name of the people of the State of Illinois——," when both he and the sheriff were surrounded, relieved of all implements of warfare and marched off to their own jail and securely locked up. A man was left to guard them and the fight proceeded. This was about two o'clock in the morning and the fight continued until daylight. It was declared a draw. As soon as the excursion had left on the return trip to Chicago, the sheriff and his assistant were granted their freedom. Of course they were very angry and were going to have everyone arrested, but nothing came of all their blustering.

McAuliffe and Myres were again matched to fight at New Orleans on September 9th, 1892. McAuliffe won and made the neat sum of \$20,000 for his share of the profits. This was just before the famous Sullivan-Corbett fight, so McAuliffe handed his whole \$20,000 to Dick Roche saying, "Dick, I am willing to go broke." "Bet this on Sullivan that he will win tomorrow night." The next night, as the famous fight progressed, McAuliffe developed a far away look in his eyes and, turning to Roche, said, "Dick, I am a pauper; you will have to lend me money enough to get back to New York." "No, no," Roche replied, "instead of \$20,000, you will have \$60,000 to take you back to New York." McAuliffe stared in surprise, "What do you mean, Dick?" he cried. "I mean just this," said Roche. "Instead of betting your money on Sullivan, I placed it all on Corbett." "Well," said McAuliffe, "What would you have done if Sullivan had won?" "Why, I would have paid you the odds," was the reply.

McAuliffe had one more fight, with Owen Zigler, when he had the misfortune to break his arm. After this, he retired from the ring, and is still living today in New York City as the undefeated lightweight champion. He has been bookmaker at the races on and off ever since.

Another wonderful fighter with whom I was acquainted was George ("Kid") Lavigne. He was born and raised at Milburn on the Saginaw River. As a young boy, he worked in a shingle mill. His first fight was with Pike Johnston at Saginaw,

Michigan, in 1888, which he won in the eighth round. He later fought an 84 round draw with George Siddons under Marquis of Queensbury rules at a roadhouse near Saginaw.

In 1889, the "Kid" beat Joe Soto (the featherweight champion of the Pacific Coast) in 22 rounds at the California Athletic Club. In 1889, he had several unimportant battles and then was matched to fight Andy Bowen at New Orleans. This fight took place at the Olympia Club, the "Kid" winning in 18 rounds. Bowen died from the punishment, but Lavigne was exonerated from prosecution.

He was afterwards matched to fight Albert Griffiths ("Young Griffo"), a great Australian fighter, at Chicago. This proved to be an eight round draw. As Griffio was leaving the ring, he turned to Sam Fitzpatrick, "My word, Sam," said he, "but isn't he a devil?" On the other hand, Lavigne told me afterwards, that he thought everyone in the audience must be throwing boxing gloves at him, so it proves that each fighter found the other a worthy opponent. Soon after this match, Sam Fitzpatrick, who had been manager for Griffio, resigned his position as such and became manager for Lavigne instead.

The Kid's next battle was with Jack Everhart of New Orleans whom he finished in 20 rounds. Shortly after this, in 1892, McAuliffe, then lightweight champion, retired, and Lavigne issued a challenge to fight any lightweight in the world. So a match was arranged between the "Kid" and Dick Burge. This match was staged at the National Sporting Club at London, England, and Lavigne came out winner after 18 rounds.

Lavigne and Joe Walcott, at Madison Square Garden, fought a terrible 15 round draw in 1895. They fought again later at San Francisco, this time Lavigne winning in 14 rounds.

Lavigne next beat Tommy Tracey, the Australian welter-weight, in 20 rounds, but he later lost in nine rounds at San Francisco to Billy Smith. However, the championship was not involved as Smith weighed 145 lbs. to the "Kid's" 133 lbs.

Lavigne did lose the championship, however, in his next encounter to Frank Erne of Buffalo. "Kid," the wonderful fighter, died in Detroit, Michigan, only this year (1928).

In 1886, the first of many Australian fighters began to arrive in San Francisco when Peter Jackson, the recognized champion of Australia, was matched to fight George Godfrey, a noted colored pugilist. They fought at the California Athletic Club and Jackson knocked Godfrey out in 18 rounds.

Jackson next scored a knockout over Joe McAuliffe, "the Mission Giant," in 24 rounds. He then made a tour of the United States taking the part of "Uncle Tom" in "Uncle Tom's Cabin" under the management of Parson Davis.

He again entered the ring in 1891 at the California Athletic Club to fight J. J. Corbett, when, after 61 rounds, the fight was

declared "No Contest." I might add that this was the poorest fight I ever saw between two first class men.

After this, Jackson went to England where he met and defeated Frank P. Slavin in 18 rounds at the National Sporting Club.

In 1896, Jackson returned to the United States, where he met his defeat at the hands of Jim Jeffries in three rounds. Jackson then returned to Australia, where he died only a few years ago.

About this time, there was a wonderful boxing instructor in Sidney, Australia, by the name of Larry Foley. He was born in England but went to Australia in 1880, and it was he who was responsible for sending over a most excellent bunch of boxers, among them Peter Jackson, Bob Fitzsimmons, Frank Slavin, Jim Hall, Geo. Dawson, Tom Williams, Billy Maber, Billy Murphy and the "Young Griff."

## CHAPTER XI .

**B**OB Fitzsimmons had a strange experience with "Bunko" men at Denver, Colorado, in 1890.

From 1880 and for several years, Denver was the home and "get-rich-quick" rendezvous of an organized band of bunkomen. Their leader was a man by the name of Jefferson Randolph Smith, alias "Soapy" Smith, who was killed at Skagway, Alaska, in 1898. The members of this gang were master hands at several Bunko games designed to fleece the unwary traveller. Headquarters of the gang were in an office building on the corner of 17th and Curtis Streets. One of their favorite indoor sports was Stud Poker, the scene of their operations consisting of two rooms adjoining each other, the first of which was used as a reception room and was somewhat similar in appearance to those generally seen in most large offices. The other room was a private one. On entering the reception room with an intended victim, the "Bunko Steerer," would ask the man in charge if Mr. Moffet was in. The reply would be in the affirmative and the two "clients" would then be invited to step right in, with a flourish of the hand towards the door of the private room. The "Bunko Steerer" would then usher his victim into the private sanctum where, seated by a table, would be "Soapy" Smith and a confederate with a newspaper carefully hiding something on the table in front of him. The "Bunko Steerer" would ask to see Mr. Moffet and "Soapy" would reply, "Mr. Moffet is out getting a cup of coffee." "He will be back in a few minutes." "Will you gentlemen be seated?" The "Steerer" would then introduce himself and victim to Mr. Smith and to his confederate some-like this: "This is Judge Clark of the Supreme Court of Colorado," indicating the confederate, etc. The Bunko Steerer and his victim would be at ease by this time and both would take seats by the table. For a time conversation would hold to common talk about different happenings, then suddenly Mr. Smith would say: "When you two gentlemen knocked at the door, the Judge and I were having a little game of Poker and the judge was expecting his wife and daughter." "His object was to fool them by covering the chips with a paper as you see." Smith would then raise the paper off the chips, causing laughter from all four. Mr. "Sucker" would laugh louder than them all. Then Smith would ask if the gentlemen had any objections to their continuing their little game and, receiving polite per-

mission, the game would continue. After a couple of hands, Mr. "Steerer" would politely ask if they had any objections to allowing him to take a hand in the game. The two players would demur for a moment saying that they hardly ever played with strangers but that, seeing he was a friend of Mr. Moffet's, it would be all right. So, Mr. "Steerer" would buy \$20.00 worth of checks, then the cards would be dealt the same as for stud poker nowadays—one card buried, the other face up. They would bet at the fall of every card. The first hand, the "Steerer" would win about \$30.00, then it would be Mr. Smith's deal. The "Steerer" would then shove over part of his checks to his victim saying, "Give my friend a hand too." Of course his "friend" would be allowed to win \$15.00 or \$20.00 the first hand, then it would be his turn to deal. Just when he had shuffled the cards and set them over for Mr. Smith to cut, Mr. Smith being on his right hand side, the "Steerer" would nudge him pointing to the floor and saying: "You have lost a couple of checks." Then, while the victim turned his head to look for them, Mr. Smith would "cold deck" him, that is, a deck of cards already fixed would be changed for the original deck. Of course Mr. Victim would get a big hand and lose his money.

Such was Bob Fitzsimmons' experience. Shortly after his victory over Billy McCarthy, which netted him the neat sum of \$1,500, \$500 of which he sent to his wife in Australia to pay her way to the States, he was matched with Jack Dempsey for the middleweight championship. Four months previous to the time set for his match with Dempsey he came to Portland, Oregon, where he intended boxing a man by the name of Dave Campbell, but he found Campbell retired from the ring, so he came on to Denver to arrange a match with Reddy Gallagher but Gallagher had also retired.

The second day of his stay in Denver, Fitzsimmons went to buy a ticket to New Orleans. While at the wicket, a well-dressed man approached him and said, "Are you Robert Fitzsimmons we hear so much about?" Bob, of course, replied that he was and the stranger murmured the usual, "I am pleased to meet you." He then informed him that he was Colonel Adams of New Orleans and inquired if Fitzsimmons intended leaving that night. Bob said he did intend to, whereat the Colonel said he was also leaving and would be on the same train. He said he was travelling with a man by the name of Collis P. Huntington, then president of the Southern Pacific Railroad, who had his private car hitched on to the regular train. He also informed Bob that Huntington was a great admirer of his and was intending to wager a large sum on him in the coming Fitzsimmons-Dempsey fight. He asked Bob if he would like to meet him and Bob said, "Of course I would."

Mr. Adams was on his way then to see Mr. Huntington, so Bob, with his ungainly stride, walked with him down Curtis Street, to where Mr. Huntington was supposed to be. Mr. Adams went through the usual performance of asking the doorman if Mr. Huntington was in and they were admitted to the private sanctum as per schedule. The same performance as above related was carried out and, when Bob had been fooled into glancing down for his chips, and the fake pack had been substituted for the original, he proceeded to deal the cards. The first man got a ten spot and the "Judge" got a trey in the hole, Mr. Smith a queen and Bob himself an ace. Mr. Adams next got a seven turned up and the "Judge" a trey, making him a pair of treys. Mr. Smith got a queen and Bob another ace, making him a pair of aces, which was the best hand so far. Fitzsimmons was high and he bet \$2.00, Mr. Adams turned his card over and quit, the "Judge" stayed for \$2.00. Mr. Smith, seeing that the two stayed, raised the bet \$10.00. Fitzsimmons stayed, so did the "Judge," so Fitzsimmons dealt another card to the "Judge," a nine spot; to Mr. Smith a five spot, and to himself a Jack. He was still high, so this time he bet \$10.00 himself. The "Judge" stayed and Mr. Smith saw the ten and raised \$25.00. By this time, Fitzsimmons had his whole roll out and stayed. So did the "Judge." As the "Judge" had taken the trey which was face up, he slipped one end under his buried card about an inch and placed the nine spot over the other end about an inch from the end, thus concealing the two ends under these, making it look like an ace. Fitzsimmons gave them each another card; to the "Judge" a five spot, to Smith a ten spot, and to himself another Jack, which made him two Jacks in sight. It was Fitzsimmons' first bet with one more card to come. Fitzsimmons bet \$25.00 and the "Judge" called it, so did Smith and raised \$200.00. This done, Fitzsimmons dealt the "Judge" a fifth card which was a trey, also a fifth card to Smith which was a duce. His own card turned out to be a trey. The cards were all dealt and Fitzsimmons was high with two Jacks. It was his first bet. He bet \$25.00. The "Judge" stayed. Smith called the \$25.00 and, pulling out a roll, raised \$1,000. Fitzsimmons said he didn't have that much, but counted out his roll and found he only had \$500 left. Smith asked if he had any negotiable cheques. Fitzsimmons replied, "Blyme! I 'aven't any." But he was willing to put in what he had and he did. The "Judge" called Fitzsimmons' \$500.00 and again asked him if that was all the money he had. Fitzsimmons assured him it was so the "Judge" turned to Soapy and said, "I will bet you \$2,000 on the side." Smith called the \$2,000. By this time, the "Judge" had deftly moved the trey out so it was exposed, leaving him two treys in sight. The best that Soapy could have would be two queens. Betting all finished, Smith turned over

his whole hand, showing two queens and the "Judge" did likewise showing three treys, which, of course, won the pot.

By this time the sweat was pouring off Fitzsimmons' face. Getting up from the table, he remarked, "Well, I 'aven't a bloomin' quid left and 2,500 miles to go." The fictitious "Judge" then said, "You will need some money for meals and berth." "I will lend you \$100 if you will send it back to me." Fitzsimmons agreed and he kept his word, returning the loan immediately after his fight with Dempsey, although, by this time, it was beginning to dawn on him that he had been "bungoed."

Shortly after his arrival in New Orleans, he, along with a friend of his, visited a well-known gambling resort where roulette and faro were in progress. Looking on, Fitzsimmons made this remark, "I have often played roulette and faro but, blyme, for the game they call Bunko, one has to have such unlimited wealth!"

Fitzsimmons little game of "Bunko" in Denver, had cost him somewhere around \$800.00.

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#### THE FIGHT BETWEEN CHARLIE MITCHELL AND JIM CORBETT

This fight took place at Jacksonville, Florida, in the winter of 1894, and the two opponents were bitter enemies.

Squire Abbington Baird of London, England, a noted sportsman, was the real promoter of the fight. He came to New York in 1893, offering to back Mitchell for \$10,000 if he would fight Corbett for the championship, promising that, if Mitchell won, he should keep all the money, that is, the \$10,000 backing and also the \$10,000 he would get if he won. Mitchell, however, was well aware at this time that he was not nearly the man he had been some six for seven years previously, so he arranged for two of his Brooklyn friends to cover the Squire's money. This settled, he challenged Corbett and the fight was arranged, the men to wear four ounce gloves and to fight to a finish, with the winner taking all the gate receipts. Corbett, of course, had nothing to do with the side bet. He did, however, bet Mitchell \$1,000 that he, Mitchell, would not get in the ring with him. Mitchell covered the bet.

Both men trained for the fight at Jacksonville. Mitchell could not get himself into very good shape but intended to do his best anyhow, at the same time keeping his wits about him to make as much money out of the deal as he could. With this end in view, about five days before the fight, he sent William B. Masterson over to Corbett's training camp. In an interview with Corbett, Masterson handed him a line something like this: "Say, Jim, Mitchell won't be able to make the fight for he can't get into condition." Corbett, of course, was furious, but

Masterson dickered with him and finally said, "Jim, the only way Mitchell will agree to get in the ring with you is this: if you will agree to divide the gate receipts fifty-fifty." After some argument, Corbett consented, and another agreement was drawn up covering the new proviso.

Mitchell was noted as a "kidder," and was continually joking with his trainers. Once, he remarked in his English accent, "I say, they say Corbett is very clevah." "Pooh! We shall see!"

When the fight finally took place, it lasted only three rounds, at the end of which Mitchell was a "total loss." After he had regained consciousness, as he was being assisted to his dressing room, he looked up and said, "They say Corbett is very clevah." "Pooh! We have seen!"

Although Corbett came out winner, he got none of the \$10,000 side bet, this all going to Mitchell, as well as one-half of the gate receipts, amounting to about \$4,000. To this Mitchell also added the \$1,000 which he had won from Corbett less a small percentage which he allowed his two friends who had covered the money from Squire Baird. If one is "clevah," sometimes it pays to be loser.

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#### THE FIGHT BETWEEN BOB FITZSIMMONS AND JIM CORBETT

Another interesting fight of which I was a witness, was that between Bob Fitzsimmons and Jim Corbett at Carson, Nevada, on March 17th, 1897.

Corbett was at this time the champion, weighing 190 lbs. to Fitzsimmons' 165 lbs. He was also the favorite in the betting—about five to two.

About five days before the time set for the fight, Fitzsimmons, in a boxing match with Ernest Rober, the champion Græco-Roman wrestler, broke the second knuckle of his right hand. He kept the fact to himself, however, not even telling his manager, Martin Julien, nor his wife, who, by the way, had formerly been Rose Julien, the acrobat. People, noticing that his hand was swollen, asked him if there was anything wrong, but he said it was all right and kept right on boxing every day.

When the big match finally took place, it was an exciting one from the start to finish. Corbett apparently had the best of it for the first nine rounds. In the 7th round, about which so much has been written, Corbett, to all appearances, had Fitzsimmons helpless, but it did not look that way to me. Corbett floored Fitzsimmons with a shower of blows, causing a rush of blood to his nose and mouth. Fitzsimmons, however, got to his feet, clinched with Corbett and, while in the act of wiping the blood off his face on Corbett's shoulder, looked over at his wife and winked. I witnessed this little side-play and came to the conclusion that he could not be badly hurt. In the ninth round,

Corbett slowed up but Fitzsimmons was making him fight and kept him going. I noticed with surprise that Fitzsimmons was missing Corbett with his right punches all the time, but, of course, did not learn the reason for this until after the fight was over. Fitzsimmons, however, made his injury serve a very sure purpose for, by always missing his right-hand jabs, he finally got Corbett to do just what he had intended him to do from the very start. In the 13th round, Corbett, instead of jumping away from Fitzsimmons' lefts as he had been doing, started to jerk his head back and get out of the way of these right hand punches. In the 14th round, Corbett led with his left, Fitzsimmons, as usual, made believe to counter with his right so that Corbett threw his head back about a foot, bringing his body forward. Fitzsimmons, missing with his right hand, brought his right foot forward and, as quick as lightning, landed a left uppercut to the pit of Corbett's stomach and, as Corbett's knees sagged, drove the same left to his jaw. Corbett fell in a heap, helpless though not knocked out. He crawled to the ropes and tried to raise himself while George Syler, referee, counted the fatal ten. Fitzsimmons was declared winner. Corbett was partially paralyzed, but, in about twenty seconds, was fully recovered. As soon as he was able, he rushed over to Fitzsimmons begging him to give him another battle, but Fitzsimmons refused him, saying, "I will never fight you again, Jim."

Corbett's friends were mightily dashed by this most unlooked-for outcome to the fight. A whole excursion train had come from San Francisco to see the fight and, so sure were they that Corbett would win, that they had had a banner made about the length of two Pullman cars and six feet wide, on which was inscribed: "J. J. Corbett, Champion of the World." But their banner was never unrolled.

My opinion of the best men in the heavy weight class from 1878 to 1904 is, in the first division: John L. Sullivan, Peter Jackson, Frank P. Slavin, Jim Jefferies, Jim Corbett, Bob Fitzsimmons and Jack Johnson.

Second division of heavy weights: Charlie Mitchell, Jake Kilrain, Alf. Greenfield, Dominick McCaffery, Jack Burke, Denver Ed. Smith, Peter Maher, Joe Goddard and Tom Sharkey.

The middle weight champions: Jack Dempsey (the "Non-parcel"), Pete McCoy, Norman Sibley, Alias Kid McCoy and Philadelphia Jack O'Brien.

The welter weights: Tommy Ryan, Joe Walcott, George Dawson, Mysterious Billy Smith and Billy Maber.

Light weights: Jack McAuliffe, George Kid Lavigne, Joe Gans, Young Griff and Frank Erne.

Feather weights: Ike O'Neil, Weir, Tommy Warren, Billy Murphy and Terry McGovern.

## CHAPTER XII.

WITH regard to myself, I have had plenty of interesting, not to say exciting, experiences in my life, besides travelling in many strange corners of the world. I have taken several very interesting trips abroad, having been to Australia twice, and once to Japan and China. I have also travelled in practically every nook and corner of the United States.

In 1892, my wife and I, together with a chum of mine and his wife, bought a house-boat in St. Paul, Minnesota, in which we drifted down the Mississippi to New Orleans to witness the Corbett-Sullivan fight. This was a wonderful trip, lasting from June 1st when we left St. Paul until we landed in New Orleans on the 20th of August.

In 1898, I also made a trip from Dawson City to St. Michaels on the Yukon in a 16 ft. canoe with only one companion, a distance of about 1,520 miles by water.

In 1893, during the World's Fair, while I was living in Chicago, William T. Stead, a London editor and spiritualist, came to Chicago to gather material for a book he was writing entitled "If Christ came to Chicago," having picked the "Windy City" as the wickedest city in the world. This book was published in 1895. To aid him in his search for material, Stead called on the Chief of Police and the Mayor to furnish him with a man to show him through Chicago's underworld. These two worthies recommended one, William Burns, none other than your humble s' vant, as a reliable man for the position, why, I don't know. However, after talking with Mr. Stead, I declined the honor. Mr. Stead lost his life on the Titanic some years ago. His daughter in London, having followed in his footsteps, claims to have had communication with him in the spirit world.

Later, in the fall of 1888, I went to San Francisco to visit Harry Corbett, a brother of Jim Corbett, who kept a place at 64 Ellis Street. I had hardly finished shaking hands with Harry when he asked me what I was doing. I replied that, just at present, I wasn't doing anything. Then he told me that I was just the man he was looking for and that he had a good job for me. I was willing, but of course was curious to know what the job involved, so he took me into his private room and told me all about it.

It seems that a man by the name of Senator Fair had died some time before, leaving a will disinheriting his only son,

Charlie Fair, who had always been considered the black sheep of the family. Now this son was bringing action to break his father's will so that he might claim his share of the estate which was worth about forty million dollars. I now found out where I came in. It seems I was to act as bodyguard for young Charlie Fair as there were strong rumors abroad that, if he succeeded in breaking his father's will, he would never live to enjoy the fruits of his labors. I may mention here that Senator Fair was one of the four Bonanza kings of the Virginia and Nevada mines, the other three being Mackey, Flood and O'Brien. Fair had two daughters, one of whom, Virginia Fair, married Cornelius Vanderbilt of New York City, the railroad magnate. The other married Herman Ulrich.

Louis Delmas acted as attorney for Charlie Fair in his fight against the injustice of his father's will. This same man, some years later in New York, defended Harry K. Thaw for the murder of Stanford White. He put up a very brilliant defence with the evidence all against his client, addressing the jury with a dramatic appeal to the unwritten law.

After a legal battle lasting about a year and a half, Charlie Fair finally succeeded in breaking the will, receiving about eight million dollars as his share of the estate. He did not live very many years to enjoy it though, for in 1905 both he and his wife were killed in an automobile accident near Paris, France. During all the time while Fair was contesting his father's will my position as bodyguard had caused me lots of trouble and worry, for the opposition was very strong and left few stones unturned to carry out previous threats against my employer.

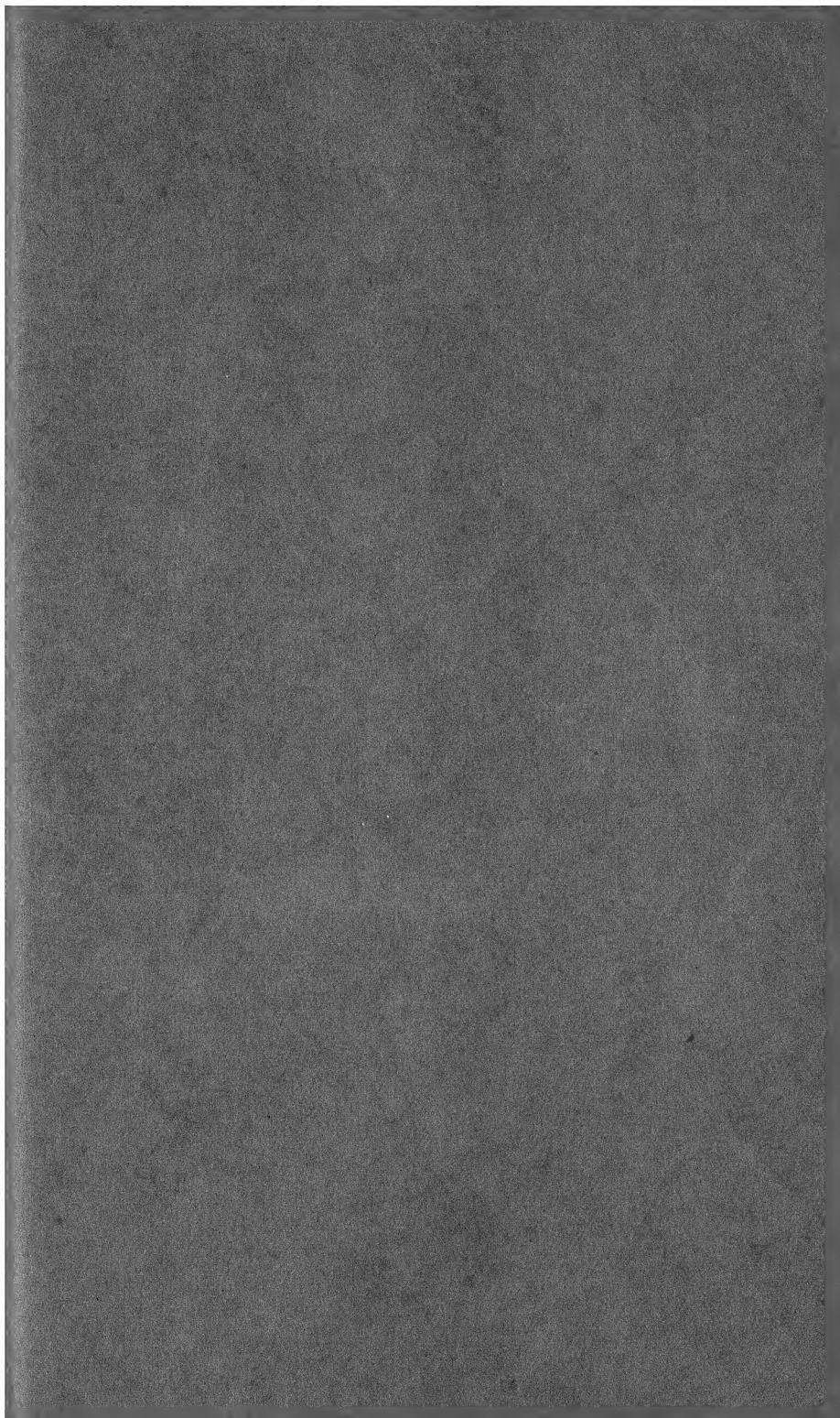
In 1906, I came to Alberta, Canada and, in the twenty-two years since then, I have held numerous and varied positions. Once I worked as tie-maker, again I joined a gang cutting roads on the old Grand Trunk line for the Forestry Department. I also had a job coaling engines at Smith on the Edmonton, Dunvegan & British Columbia Railroad, which lasted for about two years. Quite a few of my twenty-two years in Canada, I spent cutting cordwood for the steamboats of the A. & A. Company, also for the Hudson's Bay Company, on the Athabasca River between McMurray and Chipewyan.

In 1925, I received several letters from James Oliver Curwood of Owosso, Michigan, asking if he could come and spend a winter with me while gathering material for a book he was intending to write, but I always replied that I was too busy. Of course, if I had had any inkling that I was to go permanently blind within a few short years, my reply would probably have been different for, in return for my hospitality, Curwood offered me a good percentage of the profits from the book he was writing.

As it is, I am now seventy-one years of age and, though I have no hope of ever regaining my sight, still I am in good health and have many staunch friends who, I know, will stand by me always. I have had a long life full of wide and varied experiences and, though I find times rather dull now and then, I still have my memories of good times in the past to keep me company.

Are we downhearted? I'll say we're not!





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